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PAULINE

FAVORITE SISTER OF

NAPOLEON

PRINCESS PAULINE BORGHESE
Portrait by Lefevre

PAULINE

FAVORITE SISTER OF NAPOLEON

By W. N. C. CARLTON

Illustrated

1930
Harper & Brothers Publishers
NEW YORK *and* LONDON

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PAULINE
FAVORITE SISTER
OF NAPOLEON

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FIRST EDITION
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"Now when they saw Helen coming to the tower, they softly spake winged words one to the other: 'Small blame is it that Trojans and well-greaved Achaians should for such a woman long time suffer hardships; for marvellously like is she to the immortal goddesses to look upon.'"

ILIAD, III., 153-158.

BOOK ONE

§ I

Childhood in Corsica

IN SEPTEMBER, 1786, Napoleon entered his home in Ajaccio for the first time in eight years. Almost a stranger he seemed, this dark-haired serious boy of seventeen, proudly wearing the uniform of a junior lieutenant of artillery in the French army. A middle-aged woman greeted him, a woman once handsome, now worn by anxiety and exacting physical work. Nothing could ever shake the composure and self-control of this somewhat stern-faced, always reserved Corsican matron whom history knows as Madame Mère, mother of Napoleon. She welcomed her son with the mixture of respect and restraint she was ever to feel for him, as if she sensed power in this son of hers, power that would lift them all from poverty and struggle in a land grown harsh and austere, but power that inevitably would set him apart from her other children.

With the natural dignity that derived from some ancestors in ancient Italy, Roman in its severity and lack of effusion, she drew Napoleon into the room where stood his brothers and sisters, three of whom

he had never seen. A constraint fell upon the family group; the children were silent at the sight of this brother who had been away so long, awe-struck by the glamour of brass buttons, impressed by the gravity of the situation, which they felt without understanding entirely the reason for it.

Napoleon looked at them, puzzled and curious. He was shy himself. For all his experience, for all the years spent at the military school in Brienne, for all the outward signs of his maturity, he was pathetically young. Here was his home, his family, but he stood among them as an outsider. He searched their faces, hoping for some response that would break the spell of this sombre home-coming. The only one who seemed really glad to see him was the little six-year-old girl, with tousled hair and wide hazel eyes, definitely friendly. He bent down suddenly and picked her up, to cover his embarrassment. As she threw her arms about his neck in a child's complete and willing abandon, a bond was established which was to endure through both their lifetimes. Napoleon had found his favorite sister, Pauline.

It was indeed a meeting weighted with emotion, for the eight years had brought many changes to the once prosperous home in Ajaccio. The father was dead; the family resources had been drained perilously near the edge of ruin. Mortgages lay heavily on the farm, silverware had long since gone to pay the most pressing of debts, white bread and delicacies no longer

appeared on the great oak table, worn so smooth by many hands. The children were neat, but undeniably shabby—hunger lay not far below the surface. Only Madame Letitia's indomitable courage had kept the place intact. Now Napoleon had come home, to see for himself the state to which his dead father's disastrous political and commercial adventures had reduced the family, ready to assume the responsibility of restoring its shattered fortunes. He came to them as a savior, as an almost mythical being who would bring order, somehow, out of domestic chaos. Small wonder that except for Pauline, the impulsive, the Bonaparte family should place him upon a pedestal.

During the ensuing weeks of his stay, Napoleon applied himself vigorously to the task of untangling the confusion in which his father's properties and estate had been left, achieving results that brought immediate if partial relief to his harassed mother. Towards each of his brothers and sisters he foreshadowed the attitude that was to mark his relations with them ever afterwards. To Joseph, his senior by a year, he showed just the necessary shade of deference and respect expected by the vain and indolent elder brother, always sensitive of his rights as titular head of the family. Lucien, Napoleon esteemed highly and pardoned quickly after their frequent disagreements; but between these two brothers there existed something in the nature of rivalry, and Lucien was never willing to admit Napoleon's intellectual superiority. With Louis he was fa-

therly, gentle even to softness, but also something of a pedagogue. Napoleon was never much in sympathy with his sister Élisa, but this did not affect his desire and readiness to do his full duty by her.

But with Pauline he felt at once an intuitive understanding. Something in her irrepressive nature cried out to him for sympathy. To him, she was a perpetual joy; but to her mother a continuous and disturbing problem. Clambering over chairs and tables, her impulsive movements were an ever-present threat to any object in her path. Darting here and there about the house, she took frequent full length tumbles down the stone staircase, but always managed to escape breaking arms or legs. Madame Letitia breathed more easily when the child was out. But not for long. Out of doors, Pauline plunged through the thickest hedges, scaled the neighbors' walls, stirred up sleeping dogs, and put peaceable ducks and hens to flight. She took long walks alone along the seashore or out into the country, enlivening these excursions with an occasional raiding expedition on some orchard. She would return home covered with dust, her dress in strips, her shoes (when she wore any) scuffed and scratched by sharp stones. Vigorous whippings were without effect. Her pranks and impish tricks were numberless; she made victims of both young and old. When her great-uncle, the Archdeacon Lucien, lay on his death bed, Pauline slipped his purse from beneath the pillow and the long-hoarded gold pieces

rolled about the room, adding an extra agony to the passing soul of the avaricious old cleric.

Lightly and gracefully, like a winged figure on a Greek vase, this vivacious little creature danced about the rather solemn family group in Ajaccio, and Napoleon's love went out to her in full measure. She appealed to the playful side of his nature, touched the deep well of his affections.

With each succeeding visit to Corsica, Bonaparte became more and more involved in its stormy politics and civil strife. Two parties struggled for supremacy there: one, led by the famous patriot, Pasquale Paoli, sought to annul the political connection of the island with France; the other, which desired to maintain this union, included all the ardent supporters of the principles of the French Revolution and of the new Government which had established itself at Paris. Napoleon was an active adherent of the French party. It was not, however, until March, 1793, that a rapid succession of incidents brought about a crisis.

News came of the declaration of war by the French Republic against England and Holland; Lucien Bonaparte in Toulon secretly denounced Paoli to the French authorities there; three Commissioners were sent from Paris with instructions to disband the Corsican National Guards, and on April 2 they were ordered to seize Paoli and bring him to Paris—an act that roused his followers to fury and brought them into open conflict with the partisans of France. Bonaparte, acting with the

French Commissioners, made an unsuccessful attempt to take the citadel of Ajaccio, and the Corsican patriots issued an order for his arrest. Paoli made overtures to England for an alliance, and the French party, thus threatened with the overwhelming might of British naval power, saw that all present hope of saving Corsica for France was lost. Napoleon sent word to his family to prepare for flight. He realized that his career in Corsica was at an end, and that Fortune must be conquered elsewhere.

Throughout these events, Madame Letitia had remained at her home in Ajaccio thinking her presence would safeguard it and that women and children would not be molested. She was soon undeceived. The followers of Paoli began an active persecution and proscription of their opponents, seizing the latter's property and sending many of them into exile. Heeding just in time the warning of friends, Letitia and her children barely escaped from their house before it was sacked by a mob and set on fire. They were pursued even into the "bush" (*maqui*) where they had sought refuge. Reaching shelter at last on the seacoast, they were joined by Napoleon and Joseph, and it was decided that France offered the best chance of immediate safety for all. Madame Letitia accepted the situation calmly. It was a hard fate, undoubtedly, to see crash about her the domestic structure which, through twenty-four years, she had built up with ceaseless effort and unflagging industry, with care and thrift and maternal

foresight; but, in affairs of politics woman did not count. As a wife she had accepted the views of her husband; as a mother she now accepted those of the son who had put himself at the head of the family. The Corsican woman is a stoic, and stoics keep silent under suffering. On June 11, 1793, the refugees embarked at Calvi on a small sailing vessel going to Toulon for munitions. Two days later they arrived there safely.

* * *

§ II

Girlhood in Marseilles

TOULON, in June, 1793, was on the verge of anarchy. With other towns in the South of France it had risen in revolt against the Jacobin government in Paris, and the royalists, falling back before the troops of the National Convention, were preparing to admit the English and Spanish fleets into the harbor to hold the town for a Bourbon king if the hoped-for restoration should take place. The Bonapartes had escaped an island civil war only to plunge into the midst of a continental one. The two elder brothers thought it safer to install their mother and the younger children in the village of La Vallette, just outside the city, where, too, food and lodging would probably be cheaper than in Toulon. Napoleon then joined his regiment, which was quartered at Nice, and Joseph posted off to Paris. There, with others of his compatriots, he appealed to the Government for aid for the Corsican exiles, and as a result of their efforts the Convention, on July 11, voted a grant of 600,000 livres for this purpose.

During that summer, Madame Letitia managed somehow to exist on the slight pittance which Napoleon

could send her. The insurrectionary upheavals in and near Toulon compelled her to leave La Vallette, and she and the children drifted about Provence from village to village until they reached Marseilles. There they found lodging in the house of an *émigré*, which had been requisitioned by the Commissioners of the Convention as a shelter for the refugees, and there she began to receive regularly the allowances voted for the women and children. Many years later Jérôme Bonaparte still remembered vividly those first dismal quarters in Marseilles, and the cartloads of victims being driven to the place where the guillotine stood,—a grim sight for the young eyes of the Bonaparte children.

Meanwhile, Napoleon's exploits at the siege of Toulon had brought him into prominence and won him rapid promotion. When, on December 19, 1793, the French recaptured the city and the English and Spaniards sailed away in their fleets, beaten, General du Teil wrote to the Minister of War: "I lack adequate words to describe to you the merit of Bonaparte; much science, as much intelligence, and too much bravery. This is but a faint sketch of the high qualities of this rare officer. It is for you, sir, to secure him for the service of the Republic." On January 7, 1794, the Government appointed the twenty-three-year old officer a *général de brigade*, with a salary of 12,000 francs a year and an extra allowance for quarters and rations. He was also given command of the artillery in the Army of Italy and of the coast fortifications.

In the spring, Napoleon left his headquarters at Nice and went to Antibes where military duties required his presence. He summoned his mother and sisters from Marseilles and requisitioned for their use the Château-Sallé, a charming sun-bathed country house. Here Madame Letitia lived very modestly, always playing her rôle of thrifty housekeeper; even, it is said, washing her linen outdoors in the river that ran near by. The girls roamed over the countryside, tasting to the full the joys of this happy release from their recent dangers and privations.

One day, Pauline wandered into the garden of a certain M. Baliste, probably more to learn the quality of its fruits than to admire the beauty of the flowers. Some young artichokes first caught her fancy and she nibbled away at them, dropping the leaves along the garden paths. She next yielded to the temptation offered by some ripe figs, but, in the midst of her enjoyment of this favorite fruit the owner of the property suddenly appeared, a stick of ominous size in his hand. The guilty Pauline took to her heels with M. Baliste in hot pursuit pouring out at her all the oaths and imprecations in which the Provençal vocabulary is so rich. Pauline ran as fast as she could but the threatening stick had almost reached her shoulders when a savior appeared in the person of Dr. Desgenettes, an army physician on his way to call on Madame Bonaparte. With great difficulty he succeeded in appeasing the enraged owner of the ravished garden. Desgenettes told the story to Na-

poleon, and afterwards included it in his *Souvenirs*, but it was not an exploit of which Pauline herself ever boasted. She never forgot, however, the delights of this holiday at the Château-Sallé. Fourteen years later, at the height of her amazing career, she followed a sudden impulse and revisited the place in order to revive the memory of days which she said were among the happiest of her life.

At the end of the summer Napoleon returned to Nice, taking his family with him, and it was not until late autumn that they resumed their residence in Marseilles. Once more established in comfortable surroundings, mother and daughters soon found their home the scene of gay activities. Their circle of acquaintances had greatly widened. Joseph Bonaparte had married Julie Clary, daughter of a rich Marseilles silk merchant. Between her younger sister Désirée and Napoleon there was for a time at least an active love affair with a tentative engagement. Among the frequent visitors were Paul Barras and Stanislas Fréron, friends of Napoleon at the siege of Toulon and now his warm supporters in government circles in Paris. Fellow officers, Leclerc, Junot, and others came as they passed through Marseilles. Balls and dances were the order of the day and the charm and vivacity of Napoleon's sisters made them favorites at all the gatherings.

Incontestably, Pauline was the greater magnet. She was now in her fifteenth year, and, like most Corsican girls, had matured early, her figure already suggesting

the physical charms which the coming years were to bring to such perfection. Her little head was molded on classic lines, her face pure oval in shape with a clear olive complexion. She had lovely hazel eyes, and teeth that possessed the regularity of a string of carefully selected pearls. There was not a line in her body one would have wished different from what it was. She was very beautiful and she knew it. With the instinct that every beautiful woman is born with, Pauline began to use her beauty as every beautiful woman has done since the beginning of time—to exact the tribute of admiration from men.

Her beauty was, indeed, the girl's sole asset, matrimonial or otherwise. She had no education in the accepted sense of the word, nor had she revealed any literary, artistic, or other talent. She could bring no dowry to anyone offering marriage. Her experiences thus far had not been of a kind to inculcate high ideals of life or to create refinement of mind or manners. The scenes of anarchy and violence through which she had passed in Corsica, Toulon, and Marseilles; the privations of the terrible summer months of 1793; the rough contacts of the military balls given by Napoleon's officers at Nice; and the loose revolutionary morals and manners of her immediate environment—these constituted the only education or preparation for life that Pauline Bonaparte had received as she passed from girlhood to womanhood.

One of the first to fall captive to the young beauty's

charms was Napoleon's aide-de-camp, the dashing cavalry officer Junot. In Marseilles he followed her everywhere, and sat at her feet in the drawing-room like a favorite dog. The records are silent as to Pauline's response, and Junot was soon obliged to accompany his general to Paris. There, on a warm spring evening in 1795 while the two friends were walking in the Jardin des Plantes, exchanging confidences, discussing hopes and ambitions for the future, Junot burst out with the story of his love for Pauline and begged Napoleon's support in the offer of marriage he proposed to make. Bonaparte listened sympathetically to the passionate declarations of his friend, but gave no marked sign of assent or dissent. They crossed the river in a boat and passed through the streets to the Boulevard. But the nearer they approached the noise and bustle of the city, the more Bonaparte appeared to regret the words he had spoken in the quiet and soothing shades they had just left. On the pavements of Paris he cast off the sentimental mood and faced cold realities. "I cannot write to my mother to make this proposal," he replied. "You will, as you say, eventually have an income of twelve hundred livres, and that is very well; but you have not got them yet. Your father is in excellent health and will make you wait a long time for your inheritance. You have nothing now save your lieutenant's shoulder-strap. Paulette* hasn't even that. To sum up, then: you have nothing, she has nothing; what is the total?

* Paulette was the pet name by which she was always called in the family.

Nothing. You, therefore, cannot marry just at present; we must wait. Perhaps we shall see better days, my friend." So ended the Junot idyl. Five years later he married the brilliant Laura Permon, an intimate friend of Pauline. As the Duchess of Abrantès she wrote, with the assistance of Balzac, those remarkable *Mémoires* of the Napoleonic era from which later historians and biographers have quarried some of their most valuable material.

In a letter written by Napoleon to his brother Joseph towards the end of 1795, we get a glimpse of the fate of another of the moths then flitting about in the blaze of Pauline's beauty. "A citizen, Billon, who, I am told, is an acquaintance of yours, has asked for Paulette's hand. He has no money. I have written to *maman* that such a thing is not to be thought of for a moment. I will at once get additional information about this affair."

* * *

§ III

Stanislas Fréron

FROM the light flirtations of her fifteenth year, Pauline was suddenly swept into the whirlpool of her first serious love affair, and, as so often happens with girls young, beautiful, and emotionally precocious, it was a man twice her age, Louis Stanislas Fréron, who first aroused genuine passion in her heart. Undisguised admiration by a man of thirty gives to girls like Pauline a thrill of pride and sense of superiority difficult, if not impossible, to resist; and Fréron possessed other qualities even more alluring and subtle in their effects.

He came of a royalist family; King Stanislas of Poland had stood godfather to him. His father had been a distinguished journalist, well known for his bitter opposition to Voltaire. But at the College of Louis-le-Grand, where the elder Robespierre and Camille Desmoulins were among his schoolfellows, the young Fréron had become infected with the principles of the French Revolution. Scarcely out of college, he founded and edited one of the most violent of the revolutionary journals, *l'Orateur du Peuple*. Conspicuous

through the violence of his political views, he became even more so by reason of the elegance of his dress and manners which were foppish to an extreme degree. His coat was narrow, with a huge collar over which his carefully powdered hair fell in long locks. His rose-colored knee breeches fitted so tightly that one wondered how, after once getting into them, he ever succeeded in getting out. When walking, he brandished with an insolent air an enormous cane that was almost a bludgeon. The gilded youth of the day took him as their model and he was known as the "King of the Dandies." Neither his face nor his figure was handsome. A retreating forehead, long, pointed nose, goggle eyes, and thin lips gave him a marked resemblance to his friend Robespierre. Like most of his kind, he was an inveterate pursuer of women, particularly those connected with the stage. At the time he met Pauline, he had been openly living for five years with an actress who had presented him with two children and was expecting a third. His prestige as a Don Juan of Jacobinism was unchallenged.

Elected a member of the National Convention, Fréron voted for the death of Louis XVI, and for the proscription of the Girondists. His tyrannical and dishonest conduct while on a political mission in the South of France led to his being publicly described by the Girondist, Isnard, as "a man who, still young, has already attained immortality through his crimes." With the summer of 1795 his political fortunes began to ebb.

PAULINE AS A YOUNG GIRL

Failing of reëlection to the new Government, he secured from the expiring Committee of Public Safety a post as Commissioner of the Convention at Marseilles, where he arrived with Lucien Bonaparte as his secretary. Fréron's presentation by Lucien to Madame Letitia and her daughters soon followed.

Fréron, it is said, loved Pauline at first sight. Possibly he did, but the word "love" must here be used with reservations. To such a worldly and practiced seducer the girl's spring freshness was of course enticing, and piquant to his jaded palate. It may, however, be taken as certain that in the foreground of his mind there also rose the prospect of benefits to be derived from a marriage with the sister of a General the shadow of whose future power was clearly discernible on the horizon. Fréron had already made a shrewd guess in this direction when he attached Lucien to himself.

As for Pauline, she could scarcely fail to be flattered by the attentions of a man so obviously superior by birth, talents, and public position to the rough soldiers and young shopkeepers of Marseilles with whom she had lately been flirting. The woman in her was fast awakening. Girlish coquetry was giving place to a more consciously feminine response to masculine admiration. To have her beauty recognized and her person desired by a man of such distinction as Fréron gave her a new, a more exhilarating thrill than anything she had yet experienced. She could not, of course, know how expert a player he was in a game at which she was as yet a

novice. Fréron wooed skillfully, favoring her with all the age-old preliminaries and tender approaches of first love. He read and quoted to her the most moving passages of Petrarch's Sonnets; he gave her locks of his hair and asked for hers in exchange; the beauty and ardor of his expressions and professions of love, written and spoken, sent her heart racing with emotion. With no reason to suppress the warm response her whole being made to his devotion and burning entreaties, Pauline was swiftly conquered. Within five months of their first meeting they were secretly affianced lovers, awaiting only the consent of Pauline's family to the union. But here a difficulty arose, for Madame Bonaparte refused her daughter's insistent pleading to be allowed to marry Fréron, and forebade further meetings between the two. The mother's action may have been only in the nature of a suspensive veto; she may have been "playing for time" until Napoleon could be consulted. Opposition served only to increase Pauline's determination to have her own way. Clandestine meetings with Fréron followed, Lucien and Élisa aiding the lovers by acting as intermediaries for their letters and shielding Pauline from the watchful eye of Madame Letitia.

On a lovely moonlit evening in the early spring of 1796 the lovers had snatched a stolen rendezvous, strolling in the shadows of the sycamore trees, watching the lights on the ships in the crowded harbor, listening to the distant music of a military band playing in the public square. In spite of the beauty of the night Pauline

was depressed as they turned homeward, for Fréron had told her he might at any moment be sent to another post. Unless they were married immediately this must mean indefinite separation.

"But, Stanislas, you must wait until my brother Napoleon comes, for he will surely give his consent. He has known you long. He is your friend. And *maman* will never oppose Napoleon."

"Dear little one," replied Fréron, "I, too, count on your brother to aid us. I am sure of his support. But time presses. If my new appointment comes, I must go instantly. It will kill me to leave you behind."

"I will wait for you forever if you have to go without me. I love you and you alone. And, when Napoleon consents, I will come to you, wherever you are."

Fréron caught her in his arms, and Pauline clung to him passionately as he pressed his kisses on her uplifted lips. Slowly and reluctantly she withdrew herself from his embrace, for they were close to her home.

"I must go now. If mamma returns before I am in, she will wait for me. She will be angry and we shall quarrel again."

"You will write to me, darling," said Fréron.

"Tonight, my dear, before I sleep, and Lucien will bring my letter to you in the morning."

She fled, and Fréron, standing in the shadow of an archway, waited until he heard the closing of her door.

As Pauline reached the head of the stairs, Madame Letitia, candle in hand, stepped out of her room.

"Paulette, you have been out again without my permission?"

"Yes, *maman*."

"And it is with M. Fréron that you have been?"

"Of course. Who else?"

"This must not go on, Paulette. I forbid it. M. Fréron is not for you nor you for him unless Napoleon consents."

"But he is Napolione's friend. My brother will say 'Yes.' I love him. I will marry no one else. You shall not part us; you have no reason, no right."

"I say you shall not see him until Napoleon comes. It is for your brother to decide to whom you will be married. Go to your room, and tomorrow you will remain in all day. I will myself send word to M. Fréron that he is to see you no more."

Pauline flung herself on her bed in a passion of weeping, her heart in hot revolt against her mother's cold and stubborn opposition. When the storm of tears and anger subsided she got up, lighted a candle, took pen and paper, and poured out her soul in the promised letter to her lover.

"I swear to you, dear Stanislas, never to love anyone save you alone; my heart cannot be divided; it is given wholly to you. Who could oppose the union of two souls who seek happiness only and find it in their love for each other? No, my dear, neither *maman* nor anyone else can refuse you my hand. . . . We must be patient. We will write to each other and that will be

some consolation for the loss of seeing you. I thank you for the locks of your hair; I will send you some of mine, but not those of Laura, because Laura and Petrarch whom you are so fond of quoting were not nearly so happy as we are. Petrarch was faithful, but Laura! . . . Adieu, my dearest Stanislas. I take you to my arms; I love you."

Two weeks later Napoleon arrived in Marseilles on his way to take command of the Army of Italy. What passed between him and his mother and Paulette we do not know. But Fréron also saw him and received the positive impression that Napoleon's consent to the marriage was assured. Scarcely had Napoleon left the city, however, before Madame Letitia's opposition was renewed. Fréron dashed off an imploring letter asking Napoleon's intervention.

"You promised me before leaving, my dear Bonaparte, a letter to your wife; we agreed that you should tell her of my marriage in order that she should not be surprised at the sudden appearance of Paulette when I presented her. I am sending an orderly to Toulon to get this letter of which I shall be the bearer.

"Your mother has again raised objection to my suit. I plan to be married at Marseilles within four or five days; everything is arranged for it. Aside from possessing this hand which I am burning to unite with mine, the Directory may at any moment appoint me to some distant post which may require an immediate departure. If I am compelled to return here, precious

time will be lost, and the Government, having naturally no concern with affairs of the heart, will censure me for an absence that might delay my carrying out the mission entrusted to me. I beg you, write immediately to your mother to put aside her objections. Tell her to allow me the greatest latitude in determining when the happy moment shall be. I am ready; my betrothed has given her consent; why postpone the tie the tenderest love has created? Help me to overcome this new obstacle; I count on you. I embrace you, my friend, and am yours and hers for life."

Ironically, Fate chose precisely this moment to deal Fréron a staggering blow. Four days before this letter was written, his conduct as an official had been subjected to a savage attack in the National Convention. Old political enemies gathered in force and denounced his dictatorial and lawless actions, blunders and stupidities, and persistent refusal to give up the Commissionership from which he had already been informed that he had been removed. So strong was the movement against him the Government did not dare resist it, and the Directory instructed its representative in the Department of Bouches-sur-Rhone to explain why Fréron was being permitted to exercise powers of which he had been formally deprived. The news reached Fréron on March 28, the very day he had set for his wedding to Pauline. The roseate anticipations expressed in his letter to Bonaparte seemed fatally threatened. He rushed to Paris to face his accusers and defend himself.

He summoned friends to his aid, published explanations of his official conduct, and denied the charges against him, but all in vain. The mud of his past was dug up and heaped back upon him. Even so powerful a friend as Barras dared not help him, for he too was deeply involved in many of the crimes of which Fréron was accused. A broken man, his public career at an end, despised and hated by every decent element in the Government, Fréron slunk into an obscurity from which he never again emerged, save as a suppliant for some small office with a stipend sufficient to keep him alive.

Napoleon, by his temporizing with Fréron during their Marseilles interview, had gained just the time necessary to save Pauline from a disastrous marriage. Believing that it now needed only a decisive word to make Fréron understand the situation, but thinking also that it would save disagreeable scenes and explanations if this word were spoken by a third party, he wrote from Italy to Josephine: "Please tell Fréron that it is not the intention of my family to allow him to marry my sister, and that I have decided to do whatever may be required to prevent it." He followed this up with a note to Joseph Bonaparte the next day: "Pray arrange Paulette's affairs. I do not intend Fréron to marry her. Tell her so, and let him know it too."

But the affair was not to end quite so easily as this. Pauline was too valuable a card for Fréron to let slip without a struggle. He refused to give up hope of ob-

taining her. She still loved him, he knew, and was stubbornly maintaining that she considered herself in honor bound to fulfill her pledge of marriage; Lucien and Élisa remained his friends; there was at least a gambling chance that Napoleon would eventually give way to his sister's urgent pleas, and if he did, Fréron felt confident of restoring his fortunes through the Bonaparte connection. Pauline continued to write him, and they exchanged portraits as they had exchanged tresses. His political disgrace and burden of debts left her unmoved; he was the man she loved and to whom she had given her word—that was all that mattered. One thing only troubled her: the actress with whom Fréron had lived and who was unwilling to let him break off the relationship. Even here the girl's progress in the understanding of life is strikingly evident in the reference she makes to "the other woman" in her letter of May 19.

"I have just received your letter which has given me the greatest pleasure, for your silence was beginning to make me anxious; it was also very upsetting because of what you tell me about that woman. Don't worry about me: I am sick only with weariness and boredom. Write as often as possible; your letters will do something to allay my uneasiness. I am very anxious to know the outcome of your relations with that woman. I can imagine myself in her place, and I feel the greatest sympathy for her. . . . Your portrait is a great conso-

lation to me; I pass whole days with it, talking to it as though you were there. Adieu, my dear, I love you more than myself. Adieu. Forgive this scribble; it is not easy to write in bed."

The tension of the situation begins to tell on her nerves. An emotional *crescendo* is clearly perceptible in her letters of which we have three written during July. At the end of each, for the better expression of her overwrought feelings, she turns from French to her native Italian tongue.

"July 2.

On my return from the country I found your charming letter which made me very happy. And my mind was much more at ease after reading it. I have not been able to sleep, even in the country, where they have sought to distract me with every kind of amusement. You came very near losing your Paulette, for I fell into the water while trying to step into a boat. Fortunately I was helped out quickly, so do not be disturbed; the accident left no ill effects. Lucien goes to Paris in six days. . . . I am glad he is going because you can then consult with him about our affairs. I shall say nothing more to you about your mistress; all that you tell me is reassuring. I know the uprightness of your heart and approve of all the arrangements you have made regarding her. The water I swallowed in the river did not chill my heart towards you; it must

have been nectar I drank, for my heart warms to you more than ever. . . .

Addio, anima mia, ti amo sempre, mia vita."

"July 6.

Everyone appears to be opposed to us. From your letter I see that your friends, too, are faithless, even Napoleon's wife on whom you counted for support. She has written him saying that I should be disgraced if I married you, and hopes that it may be prevented. What have we done to her? Is it possible that the whole world *is* against us? Oh, how unhappy we are! But what am I saying? Unhappy we cannot be so long as we love each other. We are indeed going through a troubled and painful time, but a single letter, a word, an 'I love you'—consoles us and sweeps the tears away.

All these difficulties, far from lessening my love, only increase it. Courage, dear love; we shall, I trust, see the day when our constancy will have triumphed over all obstacles. I wish you would write to Napoleon; I will write to him also. What do you say to this? I think my [other] letter was not strong enough to convince him how much I cared for you; perhaps he will be moved by a sister's tears. You know that he can do much. . . . Adieu. Always your faithful Love. P. B."

She then adds in Italian:

"I was beginning to lose courage; not because I doubted your love, but so much opposition makes me impatient."

The proofs you give me of your love strengthen me more and more. Have confidence, in spite of your troubles. Always you are most dear to me. Perhaps things will change for us.

Amami sempre, anima mia, mio bene, mio tenero amico, non respiro se non per te; ti amo."

"July 11.

My dear one, you must be anxious at not receiving my letters; but I suffer just as much as you do in not being able to talk to you and pour out my whole heart to you. I have been in bed, ill, but not seriously. You know my sensitiveness, and you know, too, that I adore you. And here we are thwarted and miserably unhappy. . . .

Once I had the solace of being able to talk about you and unbosom myself to Élisa, but I no longer have that. Lucien showed me your letter; I see that your situation is the same as ever. Ah! how I kissed that letter, pressing it to my breast, holding it close to my heart. Yes, in spite of all these discouragements, I know I can bear them if I only have your love. How I wish I were with you to comfort you in the midst of the wrongs being done you.

Adieu, dearest. Write to me often; pour out your heart into that of your constant and faithful Love.

P. B."

Again comes the long Italian postscript, ending in a torrent of passionate expression:

"I am worried at not having received your letters; I hope they will come by the next post. Oh! my dear, what an agony this long separation has been! But I cling to the hope that we shall soon be united. Adieu, then, my dear hope, my idol; I do believe that in the end Fate will cease tormenting us and all my life will be devoted to you.

Ti amo, sempre, e passionatissimamente, per sempre ti amo, ti amo, sbell' idol mio, sei cuore mio, tenero amico; ti amo, amo, amo, amo, si amatissimo amante."

This is the last of her letters to Fréron to come down to us. She wrote again to Napoleon as she had told Fréron she would do. But he was in the full tide of his victorious Italian campaign, his power growing with every hour. He was determined that as he swept onward his family must advance with him. Again, and this time with a finality that could not be mistaken, he refused Pauline's plea. Worn out by her long resistance, the support of her brother and sister withdrawn through their fear of Napoleon, Fréron's hopeless and helpless situation at Paris showing no sign of change, Pauline at last abandoned hope of achieving her heart's desire, and yielded to the will of the Victor of Lodi. She signified her acceptance of Napoleon's decree in a letter remarkable for its elevation of tone, impressive restraint, and dignified reproach. Astonishing as it is, coming from the hand of a sixteen-year-old girl, there is no reason to doubt its authenticity. "In all truth,

what need had the little Corsican maid of schoolmasters and professors?" asks Masson. "Did she not know quite as much as any woman of fashion, she who had been taught nothing? Had not her heart led her to divine and comprehend all? From what teacher, other than Passion, could she have secured such swift and brilliant lessons in style?"

"I have received your letter," wrote Pauline to Napoleon. "It has caused me the deepest pain. I did not expect such a change on your part. You agreed to my union with Fréron. You promised to smooth away all the obstacles to it. My heart committed itself to that hope and I looked upon it as the fulfillment of my destiny. I send you his last letter; from it you will see that all the accusations against him are untrue.

"As for me, I will choose lifelong unhappiness rather than marry without your consent and by so doing draw down upon myself your severe condemnation. You, my dear Napoleon, for whom I have always felt the tenderest affection, if you could see the tears your letter has caused me to shed, you would be touched by them I am sure. You, from whom I expected happiness, you compel me to renounce the only man I can ever love. Young as I am, I have a steadfast character. It is impossible for me to give up Fréron after all the promises I have made to love him alone. Yes, I will hold to them. Absolutely no one can prevent me from keeping my heart for him, receiving his letters, answering them, and repeating that I will love only him. I know

my duties too well to turn aside from them, but I also know I cannot change according to circumstances. Adieu. I had to say this to you. Be happy, and in the midst of your victories, think sometimes of the bitterness and tears that fill the life of P. B."

Napoleon evidently decided that an entire change of scene would be the best remedy for Pauline in her present state of mind; so, as other members of the family were already with him or preparing to join him in Italy, he summoned Pauline to come, and to come under escort of the Abbé Fesch, Madame Letitia's half brother. Writing to Joseph, December 10, 1796, he says: "I expect Fesch and Paulette at Milan in a fortnight." Pauline, ill, more from nervous shock and strain than anything else, was unable to start before the end of December. To Fréron, Lucien wrote on January 4, 1797: "My mother charges me to ask you to whom you wish your letters returned. . . . My friend, this business is beginning to wear on me. Let us put an end to it."

It was the end.

This experience, coming at the most impressionable period of her life, inevitably left indelible effects upon Pauline's mind and character. There is little doubt that it profoundly influenced the whole tendency of her thought, and was largely responsible for the particular directions in which her impulses, moods, whims and desires afterwards led her. That Fréron had been unworthy of her, that marriage with him would cer-

tainly have ended in disaster, meant nothing to her, and, indeed, was irrelevant. She loved him—or *believed* she did. All that was best in her had been poured forth, only to be wasted and disappear in the sands of prejudice and expediency.

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§ IV

With Napoleon at Montebello—Marriage to General Leclerc

NAPOLEON'S achievements had dazed Europe and made him the idol of his countrymen. He had shown a genius for warfare that ranked him with Turenne, Marlborough, and the great Frederick; he had humbled Austria, the proudest dynasty in Europe, to the dust; he had shaken to its foundations the whole Central European state system. Through him, France reached the pinnacle of her revolutionary greatness and became the foremost Continental Power. "The Army of Italy surprised us every day by the prodigies communicated in its bulletins. The Directory, which disliked General Bonaparte, would gladly have thrown a veil over the glory of the young hero; but the country which he had saved from Austrian invasion and the soldiers whom he had led to victory, had thousands of voices to proclaim it."

When the Directory sought to clip the eagle's wings by assigning Kellermann to share with Napoleon the command of the victorious army, Bonaparte evaded the trap with consummate skill, kept the command in his

own hands, and even forced the Government to give him power to conduct the diplomatic negotiations rendered necessary by his military operations. The consciousness and conviction of greatness filled him. On the day of his triumphal entry into Milan, he was heard to say: "Fortune is a woman; the more she does for me, the more I shall exact from her. . . . In our day no one has conceived anything great; it falls to me to give the example." And—significant detail—he begins to sign himself "Bonaparte," after the manner of kings. It was, therefore, a new and changed brother Pauline found awaiting her in Italy. Except for his recent action regarding her proposed marriage, she had more reason than ever for admiring and loving him. Their old relations of affectionate intimacy were soon resumed; she was given a comfortable apartment in the Serbelloni Palace in Milan which Napoleon had taken over for his personal use; and Josephine seems to have shown her young sister-in-law every kindness and attention.

Outwardly, Pauline put on an appearance of friendliness and cordiality, but within, she waited and watched.

She watched because she nursed a bitter feeling in her heart against her brother's wife, who had said that Pauline would disgrace herself by marrying Fréron, and the words had stung and rankled ever since Pauline had first learned of them. What right had this Creole woman to thrust herself into her, Pauline's, affairs? What right had she to pronounce judgment on

others—she, the Beauharnais widow, about whose former manner of life Pauline had heard some none too fragrant tales? The hot Corsican blood rose in her; she came of a race and clan amongst whom the vendetta was almost an article of religion. For the rest of her life Pauline Bonaparte pursued Josephine with a hatred that never slumbered, that left nothing untried which might conceivably annoy or humiliate her, that was ever alert to seize on anything that would ruin Josephine in Napoleon's esteem. This relentless hostility was to cause tragic moments in the lives of all three.

About the middle of May, Napoleon moved his headquarters to Montebello, a fine old country seat a few miles from Milan. Its picturesque castle stood in the midst of extensive grounds with lovely gardens and shaded avenues. From its terraces one saw in the distance the Alps on one hand and, on the other, the lofty tower of Milan Cathedral, while below, stretched out in all its fertile greenness, lay the great Lombard plain. Here, in this beautiful setting, Napoleon and Josephine held court for three months. Public audiences were given in the spacious salons to the generals of the army, leading personages of the newly founded republics of Northern Italy, to famous artists, scholars, and men of letters, to princes of the Italian states, and to the envoys and ministers of kings. At the elaborate banquets Josephine presided with incomparable grace, exhibiting an ease of manner that delighted Napoleon.

Her unfailing tact captivated everyone; each person whom she addressed believed himself the chief and special object of his hostess's interest.

All, that is, except the members of her husband's family. Never could they forgive this son and brother for marrying without first securing his mother's consent, consulting his elder brother, or giving the slightest indication that he considered his action concerned anyone but himself. So grievous a breach of law and age-old clan custom was unpardonable—a betrayal of the rights of the family as a collective entity. And, looking towards the future, with rancor in their hearts, they saw Josephine as the one on whom would be bestowed the lion's share of the wealth, position, and honors for which Napoleon now seemed surely destined. Their race pride, family law, and individual hopes, all had been outraged.

Madame Letitia presented a grave and glacial front to her daughter-in-law. Élisa, recently married and looking to Napoleon for a *dot* for herself and advancement for her husband, kept her hostility discreetly veiled. Joseph, still more prudent and diplomatic because he realized he would certainly lose in a controversy with his brother just now, was polite and courteous toward Josephine, storing up at the same time a fearful indictment of her for use on a future occasion. Louis, morose and melancholy from an attack of venereal disease, was not much in evidence. Caroline and Jérôme were too young as yet to join in the feud.

Lucien, always in opposition to Napoleon, was the only absent member of the family.

Pauline's spirits quickly revived amid the gaieties of Milan and Montebello. The past was buried; the future could be left to Fate. She became again the larking *gamine*, only, a little older, a little wiser in the ways of the world. A daily round of pleasures now filled her life: dinners and balls, amateur theatricals, excursions and picnics to Lake Como or Lake Maggiore. In the midst of it came the added excitement of her engagement to General Leclerc whom Napoleon had picked out as a husband for her. Pauline had accepted him docilely, perhaps because she knew that opposition would be useless, and she had had enough of opposition; but more probably because marriage would be an escape from direct family control and provide opportunity for larger freedom of action. The poet Arnault was placed next to her at dinner one night at Montebello and has left a vivid little sketch of the Paulette of those days: "She remembered meeting me in Marseilles, and knowing also that I was intimate with her future husband, she treated me as an old friend. What an amazing combination she was of the utmost physical perfection and the most bizarre moral qualities! If she was the loveliest creature one had ever seen, she was also the most frivolous. She acted like a schoolgirl, chattering continuously, laughing at everything and nothing, mimicking the greatest personages, sticking out her tongue at her sister-in-law when the latter was

not looking, and poking me with her knee when I did not give enough attention to her antics. Every now and again her brother threw at her one of those terrible glances with which he used to crush the most obdurate men, but even this did not daunt her for long. She was soon at her tricks again, and the authority of the General-in-Chief of the Army of Italy succumbed before the giddiness of a young girl."

Pauline knew that behind the reproof in her brother's eye there lurked a hidden smile. She was well aware that however stern he might be in public, Napoleon in private would laugh aloud at her tricks and mockeries. And she had good reason to believe that were it not for the gravity required in a conquering hero, the magnitude of his task, and the restraint imposed by the presence of his soldiers, he would do just the same things himself and break out in noise and laughter with her.

Numerous scandalous tales are told of her conduct at Montebello, some of which may be well founded but most are certainly not. French biographers describe her here as an *enfant terrible* of the first order. They picture her as constantly dashing into the offices of the general staff where a group of handsome young officers was always to be found; ferreting out private papers; listening at keyholes to the broad stories told freely enough among men but hardly fit for young women to hear; and spying on her sister-in-law in the hope of surprising Josephine in a compromising situation.

Victor Emmanuel Leclerc, Pauline's fiancé, was then twenty-four years old and recently raised to the rank of *général de brigade*. He and Napoleon had first met during the siege of Toulon where Leclerc had distinguished himself in the fighting around Fort Pharon. To have been at Toulon was always a passport to Napoleon's favor; it was there that he first came into contact with some of his greatest generals and marshals—Desaix, Marmont, Junot, Muiron, and Chauvet. Besides this credential, Leclerc had publicly praised Bonaparte's conduct during the siege, when called before the Committee of Public Safety to report on his own operations. He had been on military duty at Marseilles while the Bonapartes were there, and, like so many others, had fallen in love with Pauline. Joining Napoleon's staff in the Army of Italy, he had been given charge of the political correspondence and acquitted himself so well that he had been cited in reports to the Directory as one who "united excellent conduct to a pure patriotism." Napoleon held him in high esteem at this time, and, knowing him to be of good family, some fortune, and still in love with Pauline, he thought that an immediate marriage would be materially advantageous, would wipe out the memory of Fréron, and would do something towards settling the volatile spirits of Paulette. Acting, therefore, with his customary speed after reaching a decision, Napoleon quickly arranged the affair, so that when he sent Leclerc to Paris on April 17, 1797, carrying despatches announcing the

Peace of Leoben and Moreau's passage of the Rhine, Leclerc and Pauline were already betrothed. On his way back, Leclerc stopped at Pontoise to secure his mother's consent to the marriage and some necessary documents, and the wedding took place at Montebello on June 14, both the civil and religious ceremonies being performed on the same day. Pauline, like her sister Élisa, received a dowry of 40,000 francs, from which it has been assumed that if each of the eight children had a right to this sum, the family fortune of the Bonapartes at this time must have been 320,000 francs. It was exactly four years to a day since the family had landed at Toulon, penniless, homeless refugees.

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§ V

General Leclerc—Birth of Dermide

BY MIDSUMMER, all the Bonapartes had left Montebello except Pauline, Leclerc's military duties keeping him with the Army of Italy. The first months of marriage passed pleasantly. Leclerc adored his wife but a stranger mate for her could hardly be imagined. Of modest abilities, he had a highly exaggerated idea of them. Though clever and hard-working he was not quite equal to the demands of some of the higher positions to which he was promoted. One particular vanity he carried to ridiculous lengths. Except for the color of his hair and complexion, he bore a curious resemblance to Napoleon in general appearance and cut of figure. To make this likeness even more striking, Leclerc committed the folly of attempting a complete copy of the "Little Corporal." He carried himself and walked like Napoleon, held his hands behind his back, talked in brief, jerky sentences. He tried to imitate Napoleon's looks, smiles, and movements of the lips, with the result of substituting mere grimaces for the incomparable play of expression for which Bonaparte was famous. His clothes were cut in the same

style, even to the well-known gray overcoat and monumental hat, which he put on his head in such a fashion that the parallel could not be mistaken. Men called him "the blond Bonaparte" and his lack of humor prevented his sensing the derision behind the nickname. One can readily imagine how this absurd affectation struck Paulette. But from the day when Leclerc had first seen Paulette he had loved her; as his wife, he idolized her; to the end of his days he had neither eye nor thought for any other woman. Considering the character of the period, with its unrestrained license of manners, when a perfectly upright woman was one who possessed but one extra-marital lover, Leclerc's blind devotion to Paulette entitles him to at least an honorable mention in history.

Arnault visited them shortly after the marriage. He found the general blissfully happy but rather more serious than usual. In Pauline, not a trace of increased gravity was discernible; she was still the irresponsible minx, with streaks of childish naïveté. "Isn't that a diamond you have there?" she asked Arnault, pointing to a very modest stone he was wearing in a pin. "Mine's a better one," she said, on comparing the two diamonds of which the larger was no bigger than a lentil. And the poet adds: "I have often laughed at the memory of this bit of childishness when I have since seen her covered with precious stones, amongst which the finest of our two would not have been visible."

Pauline, too, appeared happy; but her happiness

seemed more like a child's delight in a new toy; it was the married state that pleased her rather than the man who had led her into it. Did she love him? The answer depends on how the term love is to be interpreted. If a great passion is meant, a storm and ecstasy of emotion such as Fréron had roused in her, the answer is certainly No. But if it means mild affection and pleasant tolerance, due in part to the vanity-feeding element of daily adoration, and in part to the normal satisfaction a woman feels in having fulfilled society's expectations and annexed her male, then one may perhaps say that Pauline "loved" her *petit Leclerc*, as she generally called him. The cynical d'Alméras allows her nothing more than a sense of gratitude for initiation into the physical intimacies of marriage. She never tired of telling Leclerc how fortunate he was, what a great honor had been conferred on him in this marriage with the sister of the victorious Bonaparte. Her swiftly changing moods disconcerted his more slowly moving mind; her fantastic actions shocked his seriousness; her coquetry hurt his love and pride. She was, in short, that insoluble problem—a beautiful, capricious woman whom a man loves utterly, while at the same time her conduct baffles, wounds, and drives him to distraction. General Leclerc's position as "Prince Consort" to this wild young Corsican beauty, dreaming now of a golden future through the expanding glory of her brother, beside whom all other men dwindled into insignificance, was

one few could envy. The thorns were many and sharp; but his love endured them.

On April 20, 1798, Pauline gave birth to a son after a difficult confinement, the effects of which remained to trouble her for many years. By Napoleon's orders, the boy was named Dermide, from a character in the poems of Ossian, a poet greatly admired by the First Consul. From Paris, he sent detailed instructions regarding the formalities to be observed in connection with the baptism. The child was baptized on May 29 in a church of the Capucins. The next day a grand review of troops was held in Milan, and from beneath the windows of the government palace a park of artillery roared salvos in honor of Napoleon's first nephew. An imposing assemblage of officials gathered in General Leclerc's salons to hear the formal proclamations. Among them were the staff of the Army of Italy, two commanding generals, four others of lesser rank, five adjutant-generals, a dozen aides-de-camp, and a swarm of secretaries and minor officials. "General Brune, having exhibited the authorizations given him by Citizeness Marie Jeanne Louise Musquinet-Leclerc, grandmother of the child, and by the Commander-in-Chief Bonaparte, requested that the infant bear the names: Dermide Louis Napoleon Leclerc. Again the cannons sounded, drums beat, and bands played just as if there had been born in the good city of Milan an Archduke of Austria." Intimations of royal estate and dynastic

possibilities were gathering momentum in that keen brain at Paris.

Napoleon had refused Leclerc's request to accompany him to Paris when he returned there in December, 1797, after having exchanged ratifications of the Treaty of Campo Formio which he had forced the Austrians to sign in the previous October. Leclerc's position at Milan became increasingly difficult and distasteful. The rivalry between the military and civil powers, and between the generals and ministers of the Directory caused so much friction, so many stormy scenes, that Leclerc was forced to demand his recall. Arriving in Paris with Pauline, July 17, 1798, he soon after purchased a house for her in the Rue de la Victoire, and a pleasant country-seat, the Château de Montgobert, near Villers-Cotterets, not far from Soissons. In November, Leclerc was assigned to the Army of England, as chief of staff with headquarters at Rennes. Pauline remained in Paris, eager to embark upon the glittering social life of this famous capital whose praises she had heard since childhood.

Napoleon was in Egypt, sweeping the Mamelukes before him under the shadow of those massive Pyramids whose forty centuries had never beheld his like or equal. In Paris, Pauline's little head grew dizzy with the accounts of her brother's new victories among scenes even more romantic than the settings of his Italian conquests.

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§ VI

First Years in Paris—Society Under the Directory

PARISIAN society, between the Revolution and the Empire, was extremely heterogeneous. There were no recognized divisions between the various classes; it possessed neither form, order, nor stability. Those who might have brought these elements into it were either ruined or in exile. No salons existed like those under the old monarchy—gatherings in which literature, art, philosophy and science were discussed by men and women of the fashionable world with the best thinkers, statesmen, artists and men of letters of the day. In the assemblages that now went by the name of salons, there mingled a motley crew of financiers, stock-jobbers, thieving army contractors, corrupt politicians, generals rich from the loot of pillaged towns, the crafty purchasers of public property sold far below its worth, every species of common adventurer, and women of "easy" virtue, or of no virtue at all. Conversation was dead. That art required everything these parvenus lacked: education, manners, culture, intellectual finesse. Their sole diversions were dancing, gambling, and making love. Receptions, *soirées*, and balls were merely

displays of dress and the open marketing of women. The one thought common to all was money; it was the dominating object of their lives, and not a man or woman had the slightest scruple of any sort as to the means whereby it might be obtained, provided only it was obtained. Money ruled everywhere, grossly, brutally. "The men, dishonest, reckless, and vulgar, flaunted their wealth in lavish or debauched display; the women lived in a sort of delirium of shamelessness, exhibiting themselves in costumes more indecent than nudity, changing their husbands at their own caprice, and trading on the charms or influence of their lovers." During the fifteen months following the passing of the new divorce law of September 20, 1792, no less than 5,994 divorces took place in Paris alone.

"An extraordinary revolution has taken place amongst women," wrote a friend to Madame de Boufflers in 1798. "In the old days, the women of Paris were accused of being very frivolous and flirtatious, incapable of deep feeling, and even, to put it plainly, devoid of passion. Well, madame, it is quite the contrary now; the women of the day . . . are no longer flirtatious, but frankly bold (*ne sont plus coquettes, mais bien franchement coquines*). A woman finds a man to her taste, and indulges her fancy. One no longer says: 'My lover is amiable, good, or clever'; the word amiable is heard no longer, and good is synonymous with stupid. Cleverness consists in making money, no matter how. . . .

"One of the greatest joys is eating. It is the fashion to give lunches. The guests arrive at twelve o'clock, the deputies (whose wives do the honors of the house) drink a glass of brandy before starting for the Legislative Assembly; everyone, men and women alike, drinks the toast of the Republic. Then they begin lunch with tea, which is considered good style, and they end with wine and liqueurs and a hubbub that is unbearable. This lunch lasts about two hours; afterwards, whilst waiting for dinner, they play innocent little games, kissing and slapping each other and tearing each other's clothes—all this amidst such noisy gaiety that the whole neighborhood knows there is a party at that house."

Such was the world to which Pauline was introduced during the winter of 1798-99. By great good fortune her entrance was by way of the drawing room of Madame Permon, an old friend of her mother: they had been rival beauties in their girlhood days in Corsica. She had married a young Frenchman who had carried her away from the island, while Letitia, having married Charles Bonaparte, had remained there. Permon had made a fortune furnishing supplies to the French troops sent to assist the American colonists in their War of Independence against Great Britain. While he was in America she had returned to her mother's home in Corsica, resumed her friendship with Letitia, and dandled the latter's babies, Napoleon amongst them, on her knees. Later, M. Permon was appointed a re-

ceiver-general of taxes at Montpellier, and it was in his home that Charles Bonaparte died, begging Madame Permon to befriend the young Napoleon, then a cadet in the military school at Paris. When the Permons took up their residence in Paris, she was assiduous in her attentions to the lonely boy of whom she became very fond, though she never shared his political opinions. Napoleon, on his side, never forgot their kindness to himself and his father. During M. Permon's last illness and death (October 8, 1795), Bonaparte, although immersed in the momentous events that culminated on the 13th Vendémiaire (October 5, 1795), visited the house daily, rendering such services as he could.

Laura Permon tells a strange story of a proposal Napoleon made to her mother shortly before his marriage to Josephine; it was nothing less than a triple marriage between their two families. Bonaparte was to marry Madame Permon, her son Paulette, and Louis or Jérôme was to have Laura. Madame Permon, stunned and incredulous, burst out laughing. "My dear Napoleon, you are indeed acting the high-priest today; you are marrying everybody, even children." He was greatly offended at not being taken seriously. "I am determined to marry," he exclaimed. "They want to give me a woman who is charming, good-tempered, agreeable, and who belongs to the Faubourg Saint-Germain. My Paris friends are in favor of this match. My old friends dissuade me from it. What I propose to

you suits me in many respects. Think about it." It was with difficulty that Madame Permon finally convinced him of the utter madness of his plan as regards herself, and entirely impracticable with respect to the young people.

Naturally, with such long-standing and intimate associations linking Permons and Bonapartes, Pauline was given a cordial welcome. "Of Madame Leclerc," wrote the Duchess of Abrantès, "we saw more than of any other in the family. She came every day to my mother who was very fond of her, and petted her by passing over with more indulgence than her own mother the thousand and one whims which were born, gratified, and abandoned in a day." In her own household Madame Permon had retained the refined manners of a former day. Although both her husband and son had become rich as army contractors, the family had behind it breeding and culture. It had nothing in common with the wealthy crew newly emerged from the muck and ooze of the Revolution. To her drawing room only the better elements of the new era were admitted; and to it came also many of her old friends of royalist antecedents. In all Paris at that moment no safer or more decorous house could have been found from which to launch Paulette into society.

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§ VII

Pauline's Early Beauty—Character

FROM the salon of Madame Permon, Pauline passed to others, including those of the Faubourg Saint-Germain which gradually began to open again as the tide of Revolution receded. Regardless of the republican coloring of the Government and politics, she felt instinctively that Napoleon's sisters should be seen where the old aristocracy's traditions and atmosphere still prevailed. She knew that he was a hero; might not his genius ultimately lead him to a throne? Ever sensitive to all that concerned or affected this particular brother, she seemed to sense his coming greatness. Subconscious intimations of a great future position for him and her inevitable relation to it floated about in her mind, and there grew upon her that air of a little queen which she retained till death. Her quickly gained recognition as the handsomest woman in Paris confirmed the vague impressions of impending power and splendor.

The *Mémoires* of the period are unanimous in recording the extraordinary degree and effect of Pauline's beauty during her first years in Paris. Even those writ-

ten by women acknowledge it generously; the few whose tone is critical level their criticism at other things than her beauty. Typical of those who mingle the bitter with the sweet is Georgette Ducrest; she belonged to Josephine's circle which naturally viewed Pauline with lively disfavor. "Madame Leclerc was unquestionably the loveliest woman I ever saw. Neither jealousy nor envy, which are so quick at discovering a fault in whatever claims general admiration, has ever succeeded in discovering the slightest blemish in that beautiful countenance which was combined in the same person with the most elegant, the most perfect shape, and the most captivating gracefulness of manners. It was quite impossible to criticize her outward appearance; all were forced to be silent or to join in the praises which her incomparable beauty never failed to call forth. Happily for women of grovelling minds who are envious of the admiration paid to others of their sex, they had an ample field for revenge in descanting upon the mental defects, the temper and conduct of Madame Leclerc. . . . At the period I speak of, her unrivalled personal attractions were alone the subject of enthusiastic praise. This was no more than justice; and whatever could be said of her beauty fell short of the truth."

But, though perpetually repeating it as a fact, the memoirists utterly fail to describe this beauty in detail or to attempt pen-portraits of it. It appears to have baffled them completely. Those who looked upon it were dazzled, bewildered, fascinated. It was an emana-

tion, a radiation of something too supremely lovely to be subject to analysis. Elusive, phosphorescent, such beauty refused to be caught in even the most delicate or subtly woven network of verbal description. The startling, lasting effect it made on all who saw it enveloping the living woman like a visible aura cannot be reproduced and can only be partially realized today. Nor are the existing portraits on canvas any more helpful. Canova's masterpiece in marble immortalizes the physical perfection of Pauline's matchless body, but nothing can recreate its thrill and wonder when alive with pulsing blood, and animated by the mobile mind that governed its lithe and sensuous movements.

Her personality and person embraced every quality and element the word feminine connotes. Psychologically as well as physically, in character traits and personal habits, in her preferences and her aversions, Pauline was the very essence and complete representation of femininity.

At St. Helena, Napoleon observed to Las Cases that Pauline, besides being the most beautiful woman of her time, was also, and would always be, the most amiable creature in the world. On Prince Metternich and many lesser personages she left the same impression so strongly that they remembered it years after she had passed away. Amiability and extreme good nature appear to have been native to her and formed the color of her normal mood. Of course, when vexed or thwarted, she could and did thrust out sharp claws; but

this too is human, and not incompatible with a prevailing good nature.

A "spoiled child" she certainly was, and retained the characteristics of one far into womanhood. Petted and indulged by family and friends; fed with adulation by an unending stream of admirers; increasingly conscious of the offensive and defensive power of her beauty—what could result but an habitual demand to have her own way in whatever came into her willful little head? No one ever succeeded in disciplining her. Napoleon's was the sole authority that weighed with her for a moment, and he rarely held out against her for long. The weak way in which her elders yielded to her waywardness is seen in a letter of Josephine's to Napoleon when she was once generously interceding with him on Pauline's behalf: "With respect to Princess Pauline, she is a pretty child whom we have all vied with each other in spoiling; we ought not, therefore, to wonder or complain at her giddiness; indulgence will have much more effect upon her than severity, which the bare contemplation of her fascinating countenance is sufficient to disarm. You must carefully abstain from scolding her; a gentle remonstrance will be sufficient to operate a change."

In congenial company, Pauline's manners were expansive and easy-going. A trifle naïve, she was sometimes quite unaware of the seeming implications of her words and acts. Her hoydenish streak, too, led to behavior entirely misconstrued by those who did not

understand her natural impulsiveness. When in high spirits or stimulated by gay companions, she could commit the maddest follies and invent the most fantastic pranks. But when she chose, or necessity required, Pauline was as cool and self-possessed as the veteran of a dozen wars.

Intellectual brilliance she did not have; there was nothing of the bluestocking about Pauline. But she often gave voice to clever expressions, phrasings derived from no one knew where, meaning nothing in particular and not always relevant, but very droll and made more so by the odd little air of seriousness and conviction with which they were uttered. In other women, these *mots* would have been called stupidities; in her they seemed quite the contrary—because she was beautiful. Madame Ducrest, however, makes acid comment on Pauline's impatience with serious subjects. "If music, painting or history came into the conversation, she took an instant dislike to the person who introduced them. Having no understanding of such matters, she concealed her ignorance by silently sulking in a corner." True, no doubt, and quite understandable. These things bored the butterfly, and boredom she would not suffer patiently. To idlers and philanderers Pauline was a perpetual joy; a woman—every age and society know them—endowed with the peculiar charms and seductive graces all men are attracted by—in other men's wives.

§ VIII

At Madame Permon's Ball—Mme. de Contades

PAULINE'S beauty triumphed in society as irresistibly as her brother's genius on the battlefield. But her sway was not wholly uncontested. The classic story of her first real defeat (she suffered few in the course of her life) is told by Laura, Duchess of Abrantès. The scene was a ball given by Madame Permon to which were invited only the élite of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, the Bonapartes, and a few men, good dancers of the elegant idler class. Among the ladies was Madame de Contades, a daughter of the gallant Marquis de Bouillé who had striven valiantly but vainly to assist Louis XVI in the king's famous flight to Varennes. Of commanding presence, with a goddess-like head crowned with masses of luxuriant dark hair, she was accustomed to exact obedience and deference by a glance from her flashing eyes. Her hatred of Napoleon was intense and uncompromising; she would not grant him even the merit of military prowess. At mention of his Italian or Egyptian victories, Madame de Contades would scornfully exclaim: "Pshaw! I could do as much with a look." Her sentiments toward

Pauline were no gentler; with the same perverseness she refused to acknowledge the exceptional beauty of Madame Leclerc.

During the week preceding the ball, Pauline prepared for it as a good general plans for an impending battle—thoroughly and in secret. To her close friends she simply announced that she was designing a dress that would "immortalize her." She called to her aid Madame Germont, the most fashionable dressmaker of the moment, and Charbonnier, a genius in the art of hairdressing. Both were to contribute their best talents and experience in carrying out Pauline's ideas, and both were sworn to secrecy. So that she might make her entrance in fresh and unruffled state, she asked and received permission to dress at Madame Permon's on the night of the ball. The evening arrived. At just the right moment Pauline entered and advanced slowly across the room to a seat specially reserved by Madame Permon for her young favorite. "It is impossible," wrote an eyewitness, "to describe the effect her appearance produced. Her entrance seemed absolutely to illumine the room."

For her headdress, Pauline had cleverly chosen the style of a Bacchante. The shape of her head and the classic regularity of her features lent themselves admirably to this imitation. Twined about her head and holding her hair in place were bandelettes of soft fur, tiger spotted; these were surmounted by little bunches of golden grapes. Her robe, of finest India muslin, had

a deep bordering of gold, patterned with grapes and vine leaves. A Greek tunic, bordered like her dress, and held at the shoulders by cameos of great value, displayed her lovely form to excellent advantage. The short sleeves, lightly gathered on small bands, were likewise fastened with cameos. "Beneath her breasts, white as alabaster, and seemingly ready to take flight from her corsage like birds out of a nest, she wore a golden girdle the clasp of which was a superbly cut antique stone." On her round white arms glistened bracelets of gold and cameos. The perfect harmony of every detail of this creation brought forth spontaneous enthusiasm all through the room which hummed with tributes of murmured admiration.

But the moment of dazzlement over, hostile whispers were heard, some of which reached Pauline's ears. Neither the beauty of the dress nor its wearer could be denied, but feminine envy was not at a loss for something to attack. The burden of the whispers was shocked surprise at such a brazen exhibit of extravagance by one who, a few short years before, had been the recipient of a government dole and municipal charity in the city of Marseilles! Delicious hypocrisy! One instantly thinks of the obscure origins of so many of Pauline's women contemporaries, on whose equally obscure husbands or fathers Napoleon bestowed their only honors or gave the opportunities to rise to fame and position.

The beauty of Madame de Contades was eclipsed. The group of admirers gathered about her chair van-

ished to pay homage at the other shrine. If they returned, it was only to bring praises of Paulette. Such a situation was not to be endured; it called for action —immediate, retaliatory action. But whispered slanders are not the weapons with which a Madame de Contades goes forth to battle. She came of a nobler breed, a breed that fights in the open, the Fontenoy type. "Give me your arm," she commanded the cavalier by her side; and with regal steps her Diana-like figure moved across the ballroom to Madame Permon's boudoir wherein Pauline had withdrawn, pleading as reasons the heat of the larger room and the crowding of the dancers. The real attraction of the boudoir was a long sofa on which Pauline could recline in her favorite attitude of languishment and pose to greatest advantage.

Madame de Contades approached as if to take her turn in complimenting Pauline, and she did express, gracefully, admiration of the face, figure and dress of her young rival for the honors of the evening. Suddenly she turned for a further look at the *coiffure*, and then, with a start, exclaimed to the gentleman on whose arm she was leaning:

"Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! What a pity such a lovely creature should be so deformed!"

Paulette went scarlet as she heard these words uttered in a tone audible to everyone in the little room. Again, fixing her piercing eyes on Paulette, Madame

de Contades repeated in a voice of deep and sympathetic compassion:

"What a pity, what a misfortune!"

"But what is the matter, what do you see?" asked some one standing near her.

"What do I see? Why, can you not see for yourself those two enormous ears? Had I such a pair of monstrosities, they should be cut off, and I would seriously advise Madame Leclerc to do so. Surely there can be no harm in advising a woman to have such ears cut off."

Immediately all eyes were on the unhappy victim of this cruel torment. Pauline's ears were neither monstrous nor enormous, but nature had been both capricious and niggardly in shaping them, for they were but thin little bits of white cartilage, with scarcely a trace of the customary curling. Too inexperienced to meet her redoubtable adversary with equivalent weapons, Pauline burst into tears of humiliation and anger and retired from the ball, though it was not yet midnight. To the shame of the human species, observes a French writer, the triumph of Madame de Contades' malice overshadowed that of Pauline's beauty. But from that day on, Pauline's ears were kept concealed beneath her hair or a bandeau.

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§ IX

Napoleon's Return from Egypt—The Consulate

ON THE evening of October 9, 1799, Pauline and Élisa were at the theater. In the midst of the play, a gentleman in the audience saw a messenger enter their box. "I noticed a sudden excitement," he recorded many years later in his *Mémoires*, "followed by signs of joy. They left immediately, and I soon learned that they were the sisters of Bonaparte, that he had landed, and a courier had just arrived with the news." Threading a perilous path between Nelson's cruisers, Napoleon had returned from Egypt and was on his way to Paris.

Again, as in 1795, he appeared on the political scene at a moment critical for France and big with promise for himself. The nation welcomed him deliriously. At Aix, Avignon, Valence, and Lyons, he was received like a victorious monarch reëntering his dominions at his own time and pleasure. The bells rang in the villages through which he passed and bonfires lighted up the roads over which his carriage rolled. At Paris, the Directory viewed his coming with ill-concealed dread; it had failed miserably at the task of government and

France was again on the verge of civil war. Conscious of all this crucial instant might mean to him, the returned hero whispered to himself "Patience! The pear is nearly ripe." Then on the 18th Brumaire (November 9), he flung the challenging words at the Directory's envoy: "What have you done with the France which I left in your hands? I left you peace, I find war! I left you victories, I find beggary! This state of things must cease." It did. At midnight the next day he was First Consul. On the day that he ordered public mourning for George Washington, Napoleon moved into the Tuileries and all France knew it had a genuine ruler once more. In May, 1800, he swept over the Great St. Bernard Pass into Italy to attack the armies of the Second Coalition that had been formed against France. At Marengo, on June 14, he stopped an Austrian army in its victorious career, and, as Kellermann told him on the evening of the battle, put a crown upon his head. Hohenlinden completed this smashing campaign. "Since the days of Hannibal no design so daring and original had startled the world." Then, a swift return to Paris to initiate those vast works of national reconstruction which render the Consulate and early years of the Empire forever famous. A superman of seemingly exhaustless vitality was at the helm; all Europe looked on with startled wonder.

In proportion as Napoleon's position and fortunes advanced, Pauline became increasingly conspicuous in society, where, in her vain but sincere little way, she

fondly imagined she served his interests. In her eyes he was more of an idol than ever, and Josephine a wholly unworthy mate for such a demigod. During the agonizing domestic crisis on his return from Egypt when only the tears of her children prevented him from divorcing Josephine, Pauline had been the most furious of all the Bonapartes at the pardon Napoleon granted his wife. At the bridal ball of Laura Permon and Junot, Josephine wore a wreath of poppies and ears of golden corn upon her head, and a dress trimmed with similar ornaments. "I cannot understand," said Pauline irritably, "how a person forty years old can wear garlands of flowers." Laura soothingly pointed out that her mother, Madame Permon, much older than Josephine, was also wearing flowers in her hair and gown. "But that is quite different, quite a different thing," answered the rancorous young beauty.

The imp and tomboy in her were always close to the surface and she could let them loose most disconcertingly. During the summer of 1801 she and her sisters were guests of their brother Joseph at his charming country-seat, Mortefontaine, where a brilliant company of diplomats, men of letters, wits and lovely women were assembled. Among them was the Italian poet, Giovanni Conti, the last poet-laureate of Vienna, and then nearly eighty years old. In the evenings he recited the verses his facile genius had composed during the day under the century-old trees of the magnificent park. Of the three Bonaparte sisters, Élisa (Ma-

dame Bacciochi) was his favorite, and he wrote a complimentary madrigal in praise of her eyes, which were very beautiful, playing on the words *baccio* and *occhi.* Because he would not address any of his verses to them, Pauline and Caroline persecuted the old poet shamefully. While he was sitting in his armchair in grave, poetic meditation, they would steal up behind, and snatch off his wig. When he was absorbed over some difficult problem of the chessboard, they dashed up and toppled the pieces into confusion. Continual warfare went on between them. But, as always, Pauline was forgiven on account of her beauty—and Caroline because of her youth.

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§ X

General Leclerc's Appointment—Preparations for Departure

AMONG the vast projects undertaken by Napoleon as First Consul was the restoration of the lost French colonial empire. Of first importance in this plan was the reëstablishment of French authority in Santo Domingo. The Revolutionary Government had abolished slavery there and, in accordance with the principles of the Revolution, proclaimed the equality of blacks and whites. The white planters refused to recognize this decree; the blacks, led by Toussaint l'Ouverture, rose in revolt and a frightful race-war ensued. Exhaustion and the sheer horror of the conflict compelled a sort of truce, but Toussaint clung stubbornly to the idea of independence under French protection. Bonaparte refused to entertain any such idea; he would accept only full recognition by the blacks of the complete sovereignty of France over the island, and he would give no satisfactory assurances regarding their continued freedom. Accordingly, he determined to send out a combined naval and military expedition to put down resistance and set up a colonial govern-

ment with a Governor-General as the direct representative of the home authorities. Warned from Europe of what was impending, Toussaint persuaded the blacks that the French intended to plunge them back into slavery, and insurrection again broke out.

As Commander-in-Chief of the expedition, Napoleon chose Pauline's husband, General Leclerc—another instance of his pathetic distrust of all men save those he knew or assumed to be closely bound to him by ties of relationship or obvious self-interest. Leclerc would gladly have declined the proffered honor, but dared not. He had a clear prevision of the magnitude of the task involved, and shrewdly suspected that, whatever its final result, he stood to lose far more than he would gain, even as brother-in-law of the First Consul. The mood in which he accepted the appointment on October 25, 1801, may be gathered from his reputed remarks at the time: "If I succeed, no glory will redound to me. Every favorable action of mine will be viewed as having been dictated by my brother-in-law. Every victory will be attributed to his genius which influences distant events as well as those under his eye. If I fail, the responsibility will be mine alone. I shall be accused of not having known how to carry out the plans of the First Consul, which were expressly designed to break down all resistance, overcome all hazards, and assure victory. I shall, of course, do my duty, but I have no illusions regarding the fate that

awaits me; I have, moreover, neither the right nor the power to attempt to escape it. All of us now have merely to obey. We have found a master where we had hoped only for a protector." "Le petit Leclerc" was not without brains!

Napoleon gave specific orders for Pauline to accompany her husband. Madame de Rémusat hints that this was due to his having become seriously disturbed by her growing irregularity of conduct, but gives no facts to support her statement. Of Leclerc it is said that he "would willingly have dispensed with this addition to his baggage, for it was a positive calamity, after having exhausted the pleasure of surveying her beautiful person, to have the burden of amusing, occupying, and taking care of Madame Leclerc."

The edict threw Pauline into paroxysms of tears and despair. To leave Paris, this enchanting city whose pleasures she had just begun to taste; to give up her life of dinners and dances, intrigue and adulation—the thought of it was unendurable. And the unknown country to which she was being exiled! What could it be like? Wholly ignorant of geography, Pauline's imagination ran wild with fearsome pictures and anticipations. She was sure the dreadful place was filled with ferocious beasts and inhabited by cannibals. She saw herself, in the flower of her youth, eaten alive by black savages with ostrich plumes in their hair, hideously tattooed faces, and huge knives in their hands. In public,

she bravely professed her delight at being allowed to go on this splendid expedition for which the cream of Parisian youth was volunteering by the hundred. But, alone with her bosom friend, she sobbed out her woe most pitiably. "How can my brother be so hard-hearted, so wicked as to send me into exile among savages and serpents. Besides, I am ill. I shall die before I get there." The compassionate Laura tried to console by improvising facts and arguments suggesting brighter prospects. "I approached her sofa, and taking her hand, endeavored to encourage her, as one would a child, by talking of its toys, or new shoes; telling her she would be queen of the island; would ride in a palanquin; that slaves would watch her looks to execute her wishes; that she would walk in groves of orange-trees; that she need have no dread of serpents, as there were none in the Antilles; and that the savages were harmless. Finally, I summed up by telling her she would look very pretty in the Creole costume. As I advanced in my arguments, Madame Leclerc's sobs became less and less hysterical. She still wept, but her tears were not unbecoming. 'You really think, Laurette,' said she, 'that I shall look pretty, prettier than usual, in a Creole turban, a short waist, and petticoat of striped muslin?' She rang for her maid. 'Bring me all the bandannas in the house!' she ordered. She had some remarkably fine ones my mother had given her from a bale of Indian silks and muslins brought over

by Vice-Admiral Magon. We chose the prettiest amongst them, and as my mother had always worn silk-handkerchiefs for night-caps, I was accustomed to the arrangement of the corners in the most becoming manner. Madame Leclerc, looking at herself in the glass, was enraptured with my skill. 'Laurette,' she said, replacing herself on the sofa, 'you know, my dear, how I love you. You must come to St. Domingo,—you will be next to myself in rank. I shall be queen, as you told me just now, and you shall be vice-queen. I will talk to Bonaparte about it; and as he is partial to Junot, he will let you go to St. Domingo. We will give balls and parties of pleasure amongst those beautiful mountains [the serpents and savages were already forgotten!]; Junot shall be the commander of the capital. What is its name? I will tell Leclerc I expect him to give a fête every day. We will take Madame Permon too.' As she said this, she pinched my nose and pulled my ears, for she liked to ape her brother, and thought such sort of easy manners had an air of royalty. The next time I saw her she had forgotten everything but the bandanna. She had been to my mother's to have her turban arranged; and my mother, though in extreme pain, had taken a sort of pride in setting it off to the best advantage round a head which in this dress was one of the prettiest imaginable."

That description needs no underlining nor explanatory comment to bring out the high lights of its portraiture. It is Pauline to the life.

On November 20, 1801, with the small Dermide, she joined Leclerc at Brest where the troops and fleet composing the expedition were assembling. With her also she brought pyramids of boxes containing dresses, hats, and countless other "useless indispensables" that formed her wardrobe. At first, the General was disposed to object to this vast body of impedimenta being added to ships on which space for arms and ammunition was at a premium. Pauline assumed a tone that reduced him to quick and silent submission. Was not she a part, and an important part, of this expedition? Had not Napoleon, her brother, in his last instructions to Leclerc, written: "Do not fail to send me news of Madame Leclerc. I like to think that she will share a little in the glory of your expedition." The Admiral of the Fleet, Villaret-Joyeuse, gave a grand ball in her honor, and her good humor was restored. On December 14, the armada set sail.

For Pauline's occupancy during the voyage a special suite had been prepared on the flag ship, *l'Océan*, fitted with every possible utility, elegance, and luxury in order that no desire of the First Consul's sister should be left ungratified. In the wake of this lovely modern Cleopatra, there followed thirty-two ships of the line and thirty-one frigates. On sunny days she reclined in royal state on a chair on the ship's bridge, surrounded by an admiring court of brilliantly uniformed military and naval officers. One who saw her there was re-

minded of the Greek sea-nymph, Galatea, Queen of the Deep.

On the same vessel, but far below the bridge, going out to Santo Domingo to begin life anew as a humble civilian employé, was Stanislas Fréron.

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§ XI

Pauline in Santo Domingo

CAPE HAITIEN was sighted after a voyage of forty-five days, and the smoke of burning plantations greeted the eyes of the fleet—fit omen of the year of horror and disaster ahead of them.

At first, General Leclerc's operations met with signal success. In forty days of swift campaigning he had the military situation well in hand, having compelled Toussaint's surrender on May 8, 1802. Proofs that the wily old chieftain's submission was not genuine, however, led Leclerc to deport him as a prisoner to France where he died a year later from the cold of the Jura snows. But in the end victory rested with Toussaint, for his confident hope that the yellow fever would destroy the French if his swart battalions failed was more than fulfilled.

This dread pestilence broke out on the island with unprecedented virulence. Death swept through the expedition with gigantic scythe. Twenty generals and twenty-five thousand men succumbed. Every branch and rank of the service was decimated: fifteen hundred officers, eight thousand marines, three thousand sailors,

seven hundred and fifty medical officers, two thousand civilians. The medical supplies sent out from France arrived utterly ruined—unfailing sign of the army contractor in all wars. The mind could scarcely grasp the magnitude of the calamity. Out of an original force of thirty-four thousand men, General Leclerc had but three thousand effectives with which to meet a renewal of the insurrection which occurred when the leaders of the blacks learned that the Government in Paris had given the lie to the General's pledges that slavery would not be reëstablished. The negro generals said to him in substance: We are willing to remain French, to be submissive, and serve the mother-country faithfully, for we have no desire to begin again a life of pillage; but if she attempts to make slaves again of our brethren or our children, she will have to slaughter us to the last man.

Leclerc rose to heroic heights endeavoring to stem the tide of misfortune rolling in from every side, but the odds against him were too great. He had to contend with blacks and whites, the fever and its resulting social misery, and a demoralized army. He even discovered amongst his own generals some who, besides robbing their soldiers, were in secret treaty with the enemy. The utmost he could do was to keep the negro forces from capturing the port which was his base of supplies and the place where the reinforcements expected from France must embark. His very soul was seared in the midst of this agony, to which was added

the consciousness that Death lay in ambush all around him and at any moment might seize him as its victim. What would happen then to Pauline and his son? If ever the soul of a man was tried by fire it was that of Victor Leclerc in Santo Domingo in 1802.

Napoleon's parting words to Leclerc were fixed in Pauline's memory. But it was soon evident no glory would attach to anyone connected with the ill-fated Santo Domingo expedition. This, however, did not change the fact of which she was so proudly conscious —that she was Napoleon's sister and must be worthy of him. Danger and failure made no difference. A Bonaparte without courage in the face of peril or dismayed in the presence of adversity was inconceivable. Vividly her memory recalled the privations endured and disasters overcome during the nine years since the flight from Corsica. With an instinct akin to genius she elected to do the perfect thing the new crisis called for—to remain her natural self, but keyed and tuned for whatever special demands might be made upon her. By action and manner on all occasions she strove to lighten burdened hearts, calm fears, and lessen suffering. Every evening her drawing room was open to all who cared to come. Concerts were given, and music for dances played by an orchestra she formed from the survivors of the General's military band—that band whose fantastic uniform she herself had designed: a dragoon's coat, the seams heavily laced with gold; trousers of crimson cloth, tucked up, Mameluke style;

a helmet of white horsehair! Often when out driving she found soldiers lying on the burning ground nearly dead with thirst or raving mad with sunstroke; she had them tenderly lifted into her carriage and borne to a place of shelter. It is to one whom she thus saved that we owe our knowledge of these acts.

To distract her own mind she collected botanical specimens and gathered a little menagerie of the wild animals of the island. For friends and relatives at home she made up boxes of preserved fruits and cases of fine liqueurs: anisette, absinthe, and orange brandy. They all had to be packed in her presence and she was as much concerned over their safe transportation as that of the strange beasts she sent to Malmaison and the Jardin des Plantes. Urged by Leclerc to return to Paris and ensure her safety, she replied that her duty was to stay by him through evil as well as good fortune; then, with a revealing lift of her shapely head, added: "Here, I reign like Josephine; I hold first place."

One desperate attack on the town was so nearly successful that Leclerc led out his last handful of troops in person to repel it. Pauline's coolness was superb. "Her face lighted up with a supernatural beauty in which both dignity and courage were united." Officers' wives and ladies of the colony, assembled for safety in the General's residence, implored her to seek refuge on one of the ships in the harbor and allow them to go with her. "You may be afraid, you others!" she answered, "but I, I am the sister of Bonaparte and have

no fear." Melodrama? Hardly, at such a time. Rather, a flash of the great brother's spirit some part of which she felt she shared.

The fighting came nearer. Bullets fell close by. An aide-de-camp rushed up bearing orders from Leclerc to put Pauline and her son on board ship at once, and, if necessary, by force. She refused to leave her chair. Four grenadiers lifted her, chair and all, and made for the beach. "It makes no difference to me," she said, with a pout of her pretty lips, "I will not go aboard." A weird procession formed: women in evening dress; one servant with a sword under his arm, another with a parasol; Dermide, perched on the shoulders of a tall grenadier, played with the plumes of the soldier's helmet—grotesque costumes, heads mad with fear. Pauline, surveying the scene, burst into rippling laughter. "Look at it," she exclaimed to the General's secretary at her side. "We are just like a masquerade ball at the Opéra!" The shore was reached without mishap, her chair was being lowered into a boat, when a second aide came running with the news that the blacks had been thrown back and the General had ordered a return to the Residence. Upon which Pauline tranquilly observed: "I knew very well I should not go aboard ship." Thus, "surrounded by peril and plague, she gave what she could: her presence and her smile; in the face of death, she offered what she had: her life."

When a report of all this reached Napoleon he wrote

to Leclerc: "I am greatly pleased at the way Paulette has conducted herself. She should not fear death, since by dying at her husband's side in the midst of the army, she would die with glory: everything earthly passes quickly except the impression we leave on history." In the same letter he acknowledged his miscalculation of the difficulties of the expedition and expressed sympathy with the sufferings of the soldiers. On the day Napoleon wrote, General Leclerc had been dead a week. The fever struck him down on October 22; Pauline nursed him devotedly, but he died on the night of November 1-2, 1802. His body was embalmed in the Egyptian manner and placed in a leaden coffin. "A broad-brimmed hat covered some locks of Madame Leclerc's hair which she had desired placed on his forehead as a mark of conjugal love, in exchange for some of her husband's which she had requested be cut off for her." His heart was enclosed in a leaden vase and this in an urn bearing the inscription:

PAULETTE BONAPARTE, *married to General Leclerc, June 14, 1797, has enclosed within this urn her love beside the heart of her husband of whom she shared the dangers and the glory. Her son will not receive this sad and precious heritage of his father without receiving that of his virtues.*

Both coffin and urn accompanied her on the vessel that bore her back to France. Suffering greatly from seasickness and other ills, she scarcely left her cabin during the voyage. There would have been nothing

to induce her, had she been able; for, instead of a worshiping circle of gold-laced admirers, the decks were jammed with a dismal assemblage of mulatto and negro officers, army widows, Creoles, prisoners, repatriated soldiers, and civilian employés who had resigned their offices. One echoes sympathetically the comment of Frédéric Masson: *Voilà de belles conditions pour une amoureuse!*

Behind in the desolate island, in an unmarked grave, lay another victim of the fever, Stanislas Fréron.

* * *

BOOK TWO

"La Révolution nous a légué des mœurs sans gaieté . . . Oh! Mon Dieu, sans les sœurs de l'Empereur, que deviendrions-nous?"

BALZAC

§ I

Return to Paris—Honors Paid Leclerc—Pauline's Illness—Her Mourning

ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1803, Pauline again sailed into the harbor of Toulon which, as a homeless refugee, she had first entered ten years before on the little merchantman from Corsica. She now saw the shores of France from the deck of the vessel that had brought her from Santo Domingo, the *Swiftsure*, a 74-gun ship of war captured from the British, whose English name the French had preserved in order to commemorate more forcibly this victory over the lords of the sea. Pauline's first act was to write to her brother: "I have reached Toulon after a frightful voyage, and in miserable health, which, however, is but the least of my troubles. I have brought with me the remains of my poor Leclerc; pity your poor Paulette who is most unhappy." Napoleon at once despatched his aide-de-camp, Lauriston, to Toulon to bring Pauline to Paris. After fifteen days spent in quarantine and short rests on the way, she reached the capital on February 11, where, by Napoleon's orders, she went to her

brother Joseph's residence, the Hôtel Marbeuf in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré.

The state of her health was really serious. Ever since the previous July the climate of Santo Domingo had been taking heavy toll of her strength, as Leclerc had informed Napoleon; the General's illness and death, the turmoil of departure from the island, and seasickness, had made further drafts upon her. The displacement of internal organs that had occurred at Dermide's birth obliged her to remain in a reclining position for many hours at a time, and made carriage riding or even walking extremely painful. An ulcer had formed on one of her hands which long resisted both medical and surgical treatment; and, a tragic blow to her beauty, her hair had begun to fall out and she had followed the advice of her physicians to have it all cut off and allow to grow out anew. She was indeed a pitiful little figure on her return, and needed badly the two months of seclusion and recuperation that ensued in the Hôtel Marbeuf, varied by brief visits to Mortefontaine for the quiet and fresh air of that lovely country-place.

Napoleon had been deeply touched by the news of Leclerc's death. "I have lost my right arm," he exclaimed. "General Leclerc was an officer of the highest merit both in the council chamber and on the field of battle." The *Moniteur* of January 9 announced: "The First Consul will put on mourning tomorrow and will wear it for ten days." By Napoleon's instruc-

tions the honors paid the body and memory of his brother-in-law were of a kind usually accorded only to personages of the highest rank and distinction. The coffin was transferred from the *Swiftsure* to another French naval vessel and taken to Marseilles where Leclerc had once been in command of the troops assembled there. After an imposing funeral ceremony, a military escort accompanied the body on the long progress to its final resting place in Villers-Cotterets. The bishops throughout France were requested to hold special memorial services in their cathedrals, and to deliver appropriate discourses. In the towns through which the cortège passed all the troops were paraded to receive it, and a salute of cannon fired. Napoleon ordered Leclerc's portrait painted and hung in the Hall of Marshals at Fontainebleau, and Chinard was commissioned to prepare a marble bust of the General. Bonaparte may possibly, as some think, have had ulterior motives, in rendering such conspicuous honor to Leclerc, but the presumption is against this interpretation of his action. It is easier, more natural to believe that he was moved by sincere regret at the circumstances under which the General met his end, and by real affection and friendship for a comrade in arms who had been very close to him from the memorable days of the siege of Toulon to the critical hours of Brumaire, when his own fate hung in the balance and Leclerc was one of those who stood staunchly at his side.

Leclerc's estate was found to be in such a tangled condition that it was some time before Pauline knew with any certainty what her probable income was to be. Paris gossip credited Leclerc with having extorted fabulous sums from the natives of Santo Domingo, and Pauline with having brought home a treasure trove of gold and jewels hidden in her husband's coffin. Neither assertion, of course, had any foundation in fact. When a partial settlement of the General's affairs was arrived at, it appears that Pauline came into control of property and monies amounting to something over 500,000 francs, by no means a large fortune for a woman of her position and tastes. The estate, moreover, had many pressing creditors and numerous debtors from whom nothing could be secured. She would actually have been in somewhat straitened circumstances if Napoleon had not come to her aid with an annual allowance of 60,000 francs.

Society, as usual, made Pauline a favorite subject of gossip; it always did to the end of her days. She was charged with a too ostentatious parade of grief for her husband, and with attempting to play the part of an Artemisia by cutting off her hair as a sign of mourning. The story circulated that when Napoleon was told she had sacrificed it completely, he answered, laughing: "Oh, she well knows it will grow only the more luxuriantly for its cropping." The chatter about her in boudoirs and drawing rooms illustrates the mingling of distorted fact and absolute fiction that usually

characterizes such conversation; while the solemnness with which it was noted down in letters and diaries illustrates the fatuousness of hearers who accept as truth the most improbable statements. Lady Bessborough, who spent the winter of 1802-3 in Paris, attending Josephine's receptions and other gatherings of the élite, wrote to her brother in England: ". . . I am sorry to find the Roman I had made up to myself about Mad. Le Clerc is all wrong. I imagin'd she had follow'd her Husband from love, and devoted herself to him, mais point du tout. She is very pretty, had many lovers, and at length an actor, in consequence of which her Brother order'd her to St. Domingo and made her remain there. Le Clerc, they say, behav'd very ill there, oppressing the black friends and foes by every species of extortion; she is return'd with his body and his riches. They say elle a deux vaisseaux, dans l'un elle rapporte les dépouilles de son mari, dans l'autre celle des colonies." "They say!" Who could resist such an epigram as that last sentence? The phrasing was so clever the statement must be true!

Pauline's health improved rapidly, so that by April she was able to drive out in the afternoons. But, in proportion as her physical strength returned and her beauty revived, she grew more and more restive under Joseph's tutelage and Napoleon's insistence that she observe strictly all the conventions and restrictions imposed by her period of mourning for Leclerc. The inactivity and absence of amusement that this observ-

ance entailed bored and irritated her to the point of desperation. She had no intellectual resources to fall back upon, nor any facility in the occupations with which many women fill up hours of convalescence or enforced idleness. She did not read: it wearied her; the arts of the brush and crayon were unknown to her; singing or the piano were as yet beyond her; sewing and embroidery she utterly disdained. The hours passed tediously and seemed endless in duration, they were so empty of excitement and pleasurable sensation. "I shall certainly sink under this, Laurette," she wailed. "If my brother determines to shut me out of the world, I will put an end to my existence." Whereupon Junot observed: "The world has long had a Venus de Medici, a Venus of the Capitol, and a Venus Callipyges, but it has never had yet a Venus of Suicide, such as you will be." Pauline immediately brightened up, patted his hand, and said he had always been her friend.

One partial bit of consolation she did have: mourning garb became her marvelously, although, like Napoleon, she detested black in any shade or form. Madame Rémusat, never a friendly critic of Pauline, was obliged to confess: "Although obviously weak and suffering and dressed in the somber colors of her mourning, she seemed to me the most charming person I had ever seen in my life." For the first time since the Revolution, the *Almanach National* of 1803 had published the regulations governing mourning to be observed in Paris by those in official life and, of course,

high society—measures which had the full sanction and support of the First Consul. For a widow, the full period was a year and six weeks from the death of her husband. A black woolen dress was prescribed for the first six months, with headdress and neck piece of black crape during the first six weeks, followed by white crape during the latter part of this period. During the second six months, the dress was to be of black silk, and the headdress of white crape trimmed with deep black. In the final six weeks a plain white dress was permitted. But, charming as she looked in black and white, Pauline was unhappy. Of what use was it to be beautiful if there were no one to be beautiful for, no one permitted to see her, or to pay her compliments on her beauty? Incorrigible as always, she strove to escape from the web that enmeshed her and find amusement and distraction. With her, again as always, this meant chiefly—men; and, despite her fear of Napoleon, she seems to have indulged in at least one active flirtation at this time. Her victim was the bluff and stout Admiral Decrès, Minister of Marine, whose infatuation was so complete and devastating that he visibly lost an appreciable portion of his superabundant flesh, to the amusement of *Tout Paris*, which, of course, knew the "secret."

* * *

§ II

Purchase of the Hôtel Charost

AS A sure means of acquiring greater freedom, and following, too, a woman's natural desire, Pauline began looking about for a house of her own. Her choice finally fell on a splendid mansion in the Rue Saint-Honoré, known as the Hôtel Charost. Built in 1720 for Armand de Béthune, Duc de Charost, governor of the young King Louis XV, it had come unscathed through the Revolution chiefly because the last Duke had sympathized with the principles of that political upheaval, had remained in Paris instead of fleeing with the *émigrés*, and under the Consulate had served, as Citizen Béthune-Charost, as Mayor of the Tenth Arrondissement. Pauline secured it from his widow for 400,000 francs, after borrowing 100,000 francs from Joseph Bonaparte, and obtaining 240,000 from her sister Élisa on the security of a mortgage.

She plunged with ardor into the congenial labors of altering and refurnishing it to accord with her luxurious tastes. Driving daily to the shops, she reveled in the joys of selecting new furniture, candelabra, clocks, rugs, and tapestries. Going about wherever fancy led

her she sought out the countless bibelots and trinkets her soul loved, for the adornment of tables, mantelpieces, and consoles. Her pleasure was heightened by the fact that she was responsible to no one but herself in this adventure. There was no one to whom she was obliged to render an account of her proceedings, no one to reproach her for extravagance, as "le petit Leclerc" had once done with respect to a certain boudoir. Pauline knew exactly what she wanted in things both small and great. She converted the Duc de Charost's former chapel into a billiard room and drew up detailed directions for its furnishing: "You will take six chairs from the yellow salon, also two easy chairs and two sofas. The walls must be covered with yellow and silver papers; there must be no pictures but plenty of mirrors, one of which may cost 1700 francs."

On the ground floor of the new residence were three formal antechambers; a dining room lighted by two lusters of sixteen candles each, set in the heads of gilt zephyrs; a yellow salon, a *salon d'honneur* in crimson velvet, a state bedroom in light blue satin, with a boudoir in violet adjoining. On the floor above were other salons, scarlet, green, and blue, with smaller additional rooms. The bathroom was renowned, for it was there Pauline took her picturesque milk baths, twenty liters being delivered each day for this beautifying practice. Her own bedroom was sumptuously appointed; for her luxury-loving nature demanded elegance in everything around her or with which she

came into close contact. She slept in a little bed ornamented with muslin, lined and embroidered in pink, and surmounted with feathers. It was so low and small it resembled a doll's couch. Outside the house, a lawn and gardens extended through to the Champs-Élysées. On summer days when Pauline received visitors or lovers there, the ninety-nine lime trees gave coolness and shade, and the fragrance of lilacs and roses filled the air. Throughout the years she possessed the Hôtel Charost (soon to be known as the Hôtel Borghese), she never tired of lavishing expense on its improvement and adornment. The frivolous called it *Le Nid de Pauline*, and it was a veritable nest of beauty, luxury, and seductive comfort. Only when driven by cruel necessity did she part with it. After the fall of Napoleon in 1814, the British Government bought it from her, and the Duke of Wellington became the first of the long line of English ambassadors whose official home it has since been. Every visitor to Paris sees it as he passes westward along the Rue Saint-Honoré on the way to the Palais de l'Élysée. Much of its interior, furniture, and decoration remain as they were in Pauline's day. One of England's representatives, the witty Marquess of Dufferin, in whose veins ran the blood of the author of *The School for Scandal*, once slyly informed a delegation of Nonconformist clergymen, when showing them over the Embassy, that the spirit of Pauline still permeated the place.

* * *

§ III

Society Under the Consulate

FROM the vantage point of the Hôtel Charost, Pauline surveyed the Parisian scene and participated, as much as she dared, in its glittering activity. Napoleon's frequent absences from Paris during the summer of 1803 were not unwelcome to her. Absorbed as he was in the vast preparations being made at Boulogne and other Channel ports for his projected invasion of England, his eye could not be upon her always. Pauline took full advantage of the situation, for she had not the least awe of any other member of her family.

The mood of Paris at this moment made strong appeal to her. The state of affairs in city and nation had created an exuberance and lightness of spirit to which France had been a stranger for long years. From March, 1802, to May, 1803, she was at war on neither land nor sea. For just this instant between 1792 and 1814 the doors of the Temple of Janus were closed. With peace established, commerce had revived and business prosperity returned; party strife was silent, and the sense of national unity strengthened by the

return of many of the nobility and other political irreconcilables. The people had voted that Napoleon should be Consul for Life by the overwhelming majority of more than 3,500,000 affirmative votes to 8,374 negative. The preliminaries to Napoleonic domination were ended; his autocracy was so thoroughly accepted he could have established the Empire in 1802 just as easily as in 1804.

In Paris, all classes of society were enjoying the realities of present prosperity and optimistically anticipating the glamorous era into which the all-powerful First Consul seemed to be leading the nation. At the Tuileries a court and court usages were slowly forming around Napoleon and Josephine. Imposing military reviews were held every week, and the official consular parade on Sundays drew thousands of enthusiastic spectators. Napoleon's energy was tireless in all directions: diplomatic, governmental, military, social, and even in the realm of the fine arts. Almost his only relaxation was a drive out to Malmaison, at whose gates Josephine's West Indian parrots greeted him with shrill cries of "Vive Bonaparte!" "Gloire au héros!" and where he could enjoy brief intervals of rest and quiet. His customary state of mind is indicated by his parting words to an officer sent off on a mission: "Go, sir, gallop, and don't forget that the world was made in six days. You can ask me for anything you like, except time."

In public life, order, dignity, and decorum were

coming back under the leadership of the great officers of state. Cambacérès, the Second Consul, gave official dinners famous for their elegance as well as lavishness. Talleyrand, the sinuous Minister of Foreign Affairs, held brilliant evening receptions, followed by exquisite little suppers for a carefully chosen few.

The salons regained something of their social and cultural influence after having been superseded for ten years by political clubs. The elderly but still fascinating Marquise de Montesson, morganatic widow of the Duc d'Orléans, resumed her Wednesday receptions, and Bonaparte attended them to learn the etiquette of royal circles. Madame Récamier strove valiantly to reintroduce good manners and polite conversation. Her "Assemblies" were sometimes almost mobs so great was the crush at them; ambassadors, state officials, nobles and generals, artists and men of letters all jostled elbows there. Pierre Garat, whose wonderful voice had thrilled audiences in five countries, sang the songs of the day, and Vestris danced. Occasionally, the hostess herself, clad in virginal white, executed her "dance of the shawl" for the guests. Once again, too, Paris became cosmopolitan. Distinguished foreigners flocked to it, and one heard again announced in drawing rooms, after long years of absence, the great names of European nobility: Dorset, Newcastle, Dolgorouki, Galitzin, Potocki, and Zamoïski. The nondescript crowd of *nouveaux riches*, so prominent under the Directory, were now thrust into the background. Napoleon held coldly

aloof from them, and compelled Josephine to cut all her old ties with this unsavory crew.

High and low, the world was bent on amusing itself. Paris resembled a convalescent in haste to test his strength, or to make up for lost time. The parks and open-air cafés, the dance halls and places of outdoor entertainment, were thronged with a populace seeking pleasure in any and every form. The upper classes had been permitted to revive the wild masquerade *Bals d'Opéra* in 1800. To balance this, the laundresses were granted the right to celebrate *La Mi-Carême*. The theaters were packed every night; the performances ran from seven o'clock to eleven, after which came suppers lasting until two in the morning or later. Former chefs of the nobility opened restaurants in which the fine art of French cooking was restored with all its high excellence and inexhaustible variety. There were 543 known ways of preparing eggs in 1803. The menus of these fashionable restaurants were opulent. A *carte du jour* of Véry's at the Palais du Tribunat listed 8 soups, 14 hors-d'œuvre, 11 entrées of beef, 10 of mutton, 26 of veal, 27 of chicken, 16 of fish, 13 roasts, 10 pastries, 29 entremets, 26 desserts, 55 wines, and 25 liqueurs.

In private life, visible improvement in manners was seen in individuals rather than collectively; the great majority possessed nothing of the aristocratic ease and grace of pre-Revolution days. The prevailing type of social conduct and behavior was a curious blend; its

principal sources were the middle class, the stage, and the demimonde. Great ladies received callers while in extreme *déshabillé;* men sat by while the women finished their toilettes. Sexual looseness and promiscuity were common; neither men nor women troubled overmuch to conceal their liaisons. Napoleon's relations with la Grassini, Mlle. Georges, Mme. Devienne (by whom he had a son, born February 3, 1802), and others, were well known; so, too, were those of Joseph Bonaparte with Mlle. Gros, and Lucien's with Mlle. Mézeray and Mme. de Santa Cruz. To these, as further examples of errancy in high circles, one may add the intimacy existing between the Marquis de Fontanes, poet and politician, and Élisa Bonaparte, and that between Chaptal, the great chemist and Minister of the Interior, and Mlle. Bourgoin.

Thus, society under the Consulate was young, gay, and virile, with a limitless appetite for pleasure: it lived, loved, and ate hard. With its high spirits, it took life good humoredly, without sentimental complications or morbid introspection. Character and fineness were lacking, but it was happy.

Pauline stood tiptoe, eagerly awaiting the hour when she might immerse herself completely in this effervescent, swiftly moving current, whose sun-flecked foam and froth beckoned so enticingly.

* * *

§ IV

Prince Borghese—Proposal of Marriage

AMONG the distinguished foreigners in Paris in the spring of 1803 was the Prince Camillo Borghese who had left Florence the previous October for a tour through Northern Italy and France. The recent death of his father had left him, at the age of twenty-eight, head of perhaps the richest family in all Italy. The Borghese titles and prosperity dated from the election of an earlier Camillo to the Papal throne as Paul V, in 1605, and their wealth and position as a great house had been progressing cumulatively ever since. Through marriage they had become allied with many older and more illustrious Italian families, among them, the Aldobrandini, Boncompagni, Colonnas, Spinolas, and Salviati. The roll of the Borghese principalities, domains, estates, villas, and palaces reads like the possessions of a reigning monarch, and many a ruling prince or king in the eighteenth century might well have coveted the Borghese revenues, properties, art treasures, and jewels.

The Prince reached Paris the end of March accompanied by a private secretary, a courier, and two valets.

He was received with the greatest respect and deference by the Papal Legate, Cardinal Caprara, Angiolini Serravera, the Tuscan envoy, and the other Italian diplomats in Paris. The Cardinal presented him to the First Consul at a diplomatic reception on April 3, where the Prince attracted immediate attention from the fact that he was the first man to wear court costume at a Consular audience. His dress-coat was of lightweight, dove-colored material; he wore a sword crosswise, and carried under his arm a black taffeta hat with plumes. Laura Permon was of the decided opinion that the hat should have been the same color as the coat. Since he was a Prince, a foreigner, and colossally rich, Society took him up avidly; all doors and all circles were at once open to him. In external appearance, the Prince had a good deal to commend him. He was of medium height, stockily built, with regular features, curly black hair, and shining black eyes. In dress, he affected the "dandy" style of the period; he was a good dancer, and is said to have been good-natured and amiable. Sport was his chief interest, and horses in particular. His horses and carriages soon rivaled those of Prince Fuentès-Pignatelli and M. Demidof who were just then setting the pace in Paris for display of wealth and extravagant expenditure. Education he had practically none; he could not write his own language correctly, and of French he knew only a few words. "No one was more capable than he of driving a team of four horses, but no one was more incapable of carrying on a con-

versation; an admirable coachman and perfect groom, he was only at home in a stable or on the seat of a carriage." Throughout the Prince's stay in Paris his chief adviser and guide was Angiolini, who was well known to the Borghese family. This Tuscan diplomat was also a close friend of Joseph Bonaparte and socially intimate with others of the Bonapartes.

Whether Caprara or Angiolini first conceived it is not known, but the Prince had not been long in Paris before the idea of a marriage between him and Pauline was being seriously though secretly discussed by these two astute diplomatists. Undoubtedly they saw in such a match a splendid opportunity to serve the interests they represented. A marriage between the all-powerful First Consul's favorite sister and an Italian Prince so influentially connected as Borghese would create a personal tie that must react favorably on Napoleon's policy and attitude towards Italy and the Papacy; and the latter, on their side, would be assured a safe and convenient channel of communication with France both for receiving and giving delicate information when occasion arose. In the nervous and uncertain state of European politics, such a union of interests and intangible influences offered possibilities of advantage well worth an effort. From discussion, the project passed quickly to action. Angiolini became the active agent in the affair, the Cardinal remaining discreetly in the background, but being kept fully informed of every move,

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and ready at a moment's notice to bring the weight of his authority and prestige to the support of the plan.

Angiolini approached Joseph Bonaparte and Madame Letitia and gave them clear intimations of what was in his mind. Both proved cordially receptive. Caprara dropped a hint or two to Napoleon but without mentioning the name of the Prince. Napoleon replied that he would like to see his sister married again, and in Rome rather than elsewhere, provided her husband had a social position at all worthy of her. He took no further part in the affair at this stage, but left its management in the hands of Joseph, as head of the family, being content to receive reports of progress from time to time. At what point the two young persons most concerned were told or became aware of what was being planned for them, is not known; but on June 6 a family party was held at Mortefontaine to which Borghese was especially invited, and at which Pauline was certainly present and fully cognizant of the reasons for the gathering. Cardinal Caprara had arrived the evening before.

A few days later, Joseph Bonaparte authorized Angiolini to broach the matter formally to the Prince. After an all-day search over Paris, the envoy found Borghese late in the evening of June 19, and, in a long conversation lasting until the early morning hours, explained to his young compatriot, apparently for the first time, the happy fate being prepared for him by his spiritual and temporal advisers. "Borghese was more

appalled at the project than astonished, so overwhelming did it appear to him," wrote Angiolini the next day to Joseph. "He did not believe it possible to carry it out. We talked long, but reached no decision. I did not leave on this account, however, for I had discovered the essential thing: the lady pleases him." Borghese's hesitation or fright was not of long duration, for, on June 21, his mentor writes triumphantly to Joseph: "The thing is done. Prince Borghese will consider himself the happiest of men if the First Consul will graciously accord him the honor of marrying your very charming sister, Madame Paulette." The Prince requested that no public announcement of the betrothal be made until he had secured his mother's consent, and as he had not been on very happy terms with her of late, he begged Caprara and Angiolini to write the Dowager Princess on his behalf. On June 28, his secretary left Paris for Rome bearing the Prince's letters to his family, and a despatch from the Cardinal to the Papal Secretary of State soliciting the Holy Father's approval of the projected alliance.

* * *

§ V

Pauline's Acceptance

ONE cannot document Pauline's processes of thought respecting this marriage, but it is not difficult to reconstruct them. Obviously, her existing state of widowhood palled on her; she keenly desired to resume the only activities for which she cared or was fitted—those of the colorful, sense-thrilling life of Society. The image of Leclerc was fast fading from her mind, and the racking experiences of Santo Domingo receding like the memory of an ugly dream. She was, moreover, never a woman to cling long to one idea, particularly if it were unpleasant. Capable, in the face of real crises, of rising to supreme heights of decision and action, and of being moved by the finest and most generous impulses, in the ordinary course of life she allowed her frivolous nature free play, and, like a child, changed swiftly from one caprice to another. "Like a flash, she was smitten with love, friendship or esteem, and was over it as quickly. Mobile and elusive with things as with people, by turns delighted or disdainful with equal sincerity, as unstable in her thoughts as in her dwelling-places, Pauline was so much

the more the very essence of woman since in her the faults common to her sex reached a superlative degree, just as her beauty attained a perfection without parallel."

Her character was now substantially formed; the focal points, whence proceeded her ruling desires, interests, and aims, firmly established. The Ariadne thread that leads to an understanding of Pauline Bonaparte is the fact that she viewed life and the world solely from the standpoint of her own personal pleasure and gratification, and the extent to which adulation was bestowed on her and her beauty. The preservation of this beauty, and, if possible, its enhancement, became with her almost a religion. No proved or supposed aid to the beautifying of the body was unknown to her or untried; endless hours were spent in the bath and before the mirror. The art of dress, with all its little tributary arts, was of consuming interest, for a beautiful body must be commensurately costumed and adorned. And then, ineluctable corollary to the creation of perceptible, tangible loveliness in woman, there emerged the craving, the imperious desire for admiration, and, preëminently, sex-admiration. This, in natural sequence, involved the art of amorous intrigue, in which she became conspicuously adept.

"Perhaps no woman since the wife of the Emperor Claudius," says Pasquier, "has ever surpassed her in the daring manner in which she made use of her charms." Pauline had many lovers, but she was never the Mes-

salina the Chancellor's veiled reference suggests; nor would a list of them, as d'Alméras intimates, rival in number the mistresses of Don Juan. Pauline had too instinctive a sense of beauty, too selective a taste, to be as promiscuous as her maligners have represented. Naturally, she played at love as other women of her world and time did; it is the universal pastime of the luxuriously idle. Love, in its noblest form of expression, she either did not feel, or would not permit to take root in her heart. Of the many men who offered their love to her after the Fréron *débâcle*, only one or two ever aroused in her the semblance of real emotion, and then it was neither deep nor lasting. But, for Pauline, lovers had a special and important significance; they presented concrete, unmistakable proofs that her beauty still produced its desired effects; they sanctioned and prolonged its reign. Not to have had men at her feet adoring her loveliness would have meant that her most treasured possession was lost, and with it would have gone all life's meaning and attraction. Her overmastering ambition was, not to have men *love* her, but to *prefer* her to all other women because of her beauty. For this, she paid as much or as little as the value she placed on an admirer dictated, or caprice or impulse prompted. The medium of exchange, of course, was her body.

Excluding, therefore, as one must, any thought of a grand passion, marriage would be an easy hurdle for Pauline to take if it brought immediate escape from an

unpleasant situation, and especially if, in addition, it carried with it rich opportunities for following her inclinations, gratifying her wishes, and achieving her ambitions. A union with Prince Borghese held out precisely such an alluring prospect. To be a Princess, a real Princess, how this would lift her above her sisters, who as yet had no titles; above all, what a crushing victory over Josephine, who, although wife of the most commanding figure in Europe, was still only plain *Madame* Bonaparte. Her carriages would mount historic armorial bearings; she would wear a coronet fastened with the winged dragon and eagle of the Borgheses. Rome, new scenes, life in noble palaces and sunny villas; balls and receptions; a new social world to conquer with her beauty and astonish with the magnificence of her gowns. Instant leadership would be hers with the Borghese position and wealth at her command; and, as the sister of Napoleon, she would receive the homage of the great in politics, diplomacy, and the Church. And the Borghese jewels, incontestably among the finest in the world! Who in all Europe could wear them more fittingly? From whose person would their brilliance shine with greater splendor? Her reveries of the future grew ever fairer and more enchanting. What woman's imagination could escape bewitchment by such a vision, what truly feminine nature not yield to such a siren song of temptation?

Pauline wrote to Napoleon asking his consent to the marriage.

* * *

§ VI

Pauline's Marriage to Borghese

WORD soon arrived at Paris that the marriage was viewed at Rome with the greatest favor. Angiolini informed Caprara, then at Brussels with the First Consul, that the responses from the Prince's mother and the Vatican Secretary of State expressed the utmost satisfaction and pleasure. Cardinal Fesch (he had just been raised to this dignity), writing from Rome to Napoleon, said: "His Holiness is delighted; the Roman nobility is also pleased; and the Princess Borghese is extremely gratified and eager for the moment when she may embrace your sister. She is sending to Paris her second son, Prince Aldobrandini, as a mark of her approval. She is a good woman who will make life happy for Paulette." Then, always mindful of his own interests, Letitia's crafty half brother suggested that, as the marriage would connect him with one of the first families in Rome, his expenses would consequently be greater, and asked for an increase in the allowance made him by Napoleon.

Napoleon, in a conversation at St. Helena, accounted for the enthusiasm with which Pauline's engagement to

Borghese was received at Rome by saying that in Italy the Bonapartes were generally regarded as Italian, and that it was therefore "a family affair," the Borgheses and their connections exclaiming: "C'est bien! C'est entre nous, c'est une de nos familles!" The truth is, however, that if Pauline had not been the sister of Napoleon, the "mystery man" feared by every European power, the Legate of the Holy See would never have thought of her as a potentially valuable pawn on the chessboard of international politics, and Roman Society, always coldly proud and exclusive, would never have given her a welcome.

Preparations for the wedding were speedily under way, the legal notices being published at Mortefontaine on August 14 and August 21. On the twenty-third, the marriage contract was drawn up and signed at the Hôtel Charost, Angiolini acting for Borghese and Joseph Bonaparte for Pauline. From Napoleon she received a dowry of 500,000 francs, to which diamonds valued at 300,000 francs were to be added later. The Prince agreed to give her an annual allowance of 20,000 francs for dresses. If he pre-deceased her, the dowry was to be returned, and an income of 50,000 francs a year granted her, together with the use for life of apartments in the Borghese Palace in Rome, and the cost of maintaining two carriages. Wisely doubting himself in the matter of wedding presents, the Prince gave Pauline 45,000 francs with which to purchase something of her own choice. All was ready for the

PAULINE AS THE PRINCESS BORGHESE
From the Wallace Collection, London
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marriage date to be set when a curious obstacle loomed up. As Masson dryly observes: "They had forgotten Leclerc."

Under the French Civil Code a widow was permitted to marry again after the lapse of ten full months from the dissolution of her previous marriage. As the General had died on November 2, 1802, Pauline might legally remarry on or about August 30, or certainly on September 22, 1803. But, the official regulations for mourning laid down in the *Almanach National* prescribed a year and six weeks as the duration of a widow's public show of respect for the memory of her husband. Napoleon was at Saint-Cloud, busied day and night with tangled diplomatic affairs involving his relations with Spain, Russia, and the war with England; but, when consulted on the difficulty that had arisen, found time to make clear to his family his emphatic refusal to consent to Pauline's remarriage before at least a year had elapsed from the date of Leclerc's death. He could not and would not permit his own sister to be one of the first to violate social rules whose restoration he, as First Consul, had expressly approved—rules which, his mind looking forward, he had special reasons for wishing to see strictly observed. His decision obliged the family to make public announcement that the date of the marriage had been indefinitely postponed.

And then, an astounding thing occurred. To this day, no satisfactory or defensible reason for it has come to light. Madame Letitia's consent to an immediate

marriage was secured and the religious ceremony privately performed at Mortefontaine by an Italian priest, possibly Caprara himself, in the presence of Pauline's mother and brothers, Joseph and Lucien—the whole matter being kept secret from Napoleon. That the marriage was lawful in the eyes of the Church is shown by letters of Angiolini in which he refers to Borghese and Pauline as *époux*, and says that "they will pass the next two months in the country until the end of their mourning." The *their* is amusing.

How this extraordinary event escaped the knowledge of Napoleon it is impossible to conjecture, but there appears to be no doubt that it did. Towards the end of September, he invited Pauline to a great banquet he was giving at the Tuileries, after which he took her out with him to Saint-Cloud for a few days; perhaps, knowing her as he did, to give her change and distraction, or perhaps to keep a closer watch on her for some reason—and he usually had plenty. On the twenty-third of October he gave a dinner of one hundred and ninety-three covers in her honor, and to this Borghese was invited, for the marriage ceremony to which Napoleon had consented was now less than two weeks away. But the truth had now to be told him. In the last days of October he learned that the approaching ceremony was the civil rite, and that the religious marriage had taken place two months before. The great First Consul was justly incensed and deeply hurt at the deceit practiced upon him by his family and the

Papal Legate. He could, however, do nothing to make his anger publicly manifest, for it was already known that he had agreed to the *November* marriage, had paid his sister's dowry, and honored her and the Prince with a betrothal banquet. Only one way was open to him to punish Paulette, and mark his resentment at the affront to his dignity and at the willful disregard all had shown towards his expressed wishes. He refused to sanction by his presence a ceremony which, technically legal though it might be, he viewed as a violation of a social code quite as important as the law. On the pretext of public business he left Paris November 3 for the great camp at Boulogne.

Pauline and Borghese passed through the civil ceremony at Mortefontaine on November 6, 1803. Only members of her family and a few intimate friends were present: Madame Letitia, Joseph and Louis Bonaparte with their wives, her sister Caroline, Josephine, and the official witnesses. There was no fête, no celebration of any sort; everything was nearly as private and secret as on the occasion of the religious ceremony in August.

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§ VII

Trousseau and Diamonds—Reception by Josephine

THE necessity for keeping Napoleon in the dark, together with her absences from Paris at Mortefontaine and Saint-Cloud, had prevented Pauline from assembling her trousseau and making other preparations for the journey to Rome. The hectic pace with which she now set about these things, and the maddening frequency with which she kept changing her mind on matters of the first importance, made the Hôtel Charost resemble at times a veritable madhouse, so distracted were both tradespeople and servants by the feverish, inconstant moods of its mistress.

Madame Germont came with armfuls of dress goods. Pauline threw them a glance, rejected all, and demanded a new supply from which to choose. As soon as a gown was made up, she pronounced it out of style. The trimmings of lace or embroidery had to be changed and rechanged till the sempstresses grew frantic. Mademoiselle Lolive was no more successful with the lingerie, and she had long been acquainted with the fantastic ways of this beautiful madcap, who left for Santo Domingo owing her 20,000 francs and, imme-

diately upon returning, had ordered 4,000 francs worth more of the dainty things worn next to her velvety skin. And, *was* there, outside Paris, an artist in hairdressing capable of appreciating her shapely head, of properly curling its dark locks, still short from the recent sacrifice, or of dressing it in that coquettish Jewish style that concealed the hair under a fetching headband? To entice such a master away from Paris was impossible, but surely an intelligent pupil could be taught. Pauline paid 800 francs to have her maid given lessons in this indispensable art. Nor were dress and toilette all that had to be thought of. To appear advantageously in Rome a Princess must be practiced in the ceremonial manners of the circles she was to adorn. She must know how to receive, to walk, to dance, and to make those slow, graceful obeisances in which the entire body inclines in a single movement, harmonious and supple. Pauline paid 300 francs for special instruction in dancing and deportment. Infinite pains were expended on the resettings and new mountings of the Borghese jewels. Artists submitted design after design; jewelers lost themselves in countless estimates. When all were assembled they represented a king's ransom. Diamonds worth over a million francs; emeralds, sapphires, and rubies without number; six strings of large pearls, and another of three hundred and sixty-nine smaller ones; necklaces, bracelets, medallions, and cameos, priceless in value and exquisite in artistry; a butterfly, bandeau, girdle, and *bouquet* of precious stones—this is but a

partial list of the gems that henceforth were to add their luster to Pauline's beauty.

The first occasion on which she wore them was long remembered by her contemporaries. Among the formal visits expected of the Prince and Princess the one to Josephine was by far the most important—for many reasons. Pauline, in planning for it, left no essential point unstudied, neglected no detail. She knew that at her public reception by Josephine the air would be charged and tense with their rivalry and antagonisms however skillfully they might conceal them beneath the smooth surface of conventional courtesy and politeness. After considering every color and material her final choice for a dress was green velvet—a selection she tried to keep secret. Josephine of course learned of it and had the salon in which the reception was to take place equipped and furnished throughout in *blue.*

At nine o'clock in the evening, Pauline and the Prince drove into the courtyard of the Palace of Saint-Cloud in a carriage drawn by six horses, with liveried outriders on horseback, torches in hand, preceding and following them. At the door of the reception room, a lackey drew back the heavy draperies and announced: "Monsignor the Prince and Madame the Princess Borghese." Josephine sat at the far end of the salon, and official etiquette permitted her to remain seated—to her, doubtless, a pleasing feature of the occasion. Deliberately, she had elected to dress with the utmost simplicity, and she had done so with the faultless taste

that never failed her in such matters. She wore a simple but costly Indian muslin, light and filmy, without trimming or ornament except a narrow gold border at the lower edge. Two gold lions' heads set in black enamel held it at the shoulders, and around her waist hung a golden girdle with another lion's head, similar to those on her shoulders, as a clasp. In this becoming costume, with her bare arms, opulent bosom, and curving body lines, Josephine might well have been judged the handsomest woman in the room—before her sister-in-law entered.

Pauline, her head and neck bent slightly forward,—a little affectation she thought graceful,—passed into the salon and traversed its entire length with slow and languorous steps. The green velvet blazed. A thousand diamonds shone like stars. Those for which no place had been found on the dress were in her hair, on her neck and arms and hands. She was a cascade of fire and lightning flashes. A smile illumined her face. One felt her very soul was smiling at the beauty of her person and its impressive effect on all beholders. The admiration that leaped into the eyes of the men, the jealousy that smoldered in those of the women—both tributes brought a glow of happiness into the pale ivory of her cheeks. The lingering pace seemed chosen for the purpose of giving the longest possible life to the sweet sensations of this ecstatic moment. When at last she stood before Josephine, the two women smiled graciously at each other and exchanged the requisite felici-

tations. The young bride then circled the room, all eyes drinking in her beauty, and took a chair beside Laurette.

Blue tapestries and blue furniture could neither mar nor eclipse youth and beauty in such perfection. Josephine was forty, bearing those telltale touches of Time no art can conceal, and her teeth were the despair of dentists.

On leaving the Palace after the reception, Pauline insisted on Madame Junot's sitting beside her in the carriage during the ride back to Paris.

"But I should interrupt your tête-à-tête with the Prince," demurred Laura. "You are in the midst of your honeymoon and . . ."

"A honeymoon with that imbecile," broke in Pauline. "What on earth are you thinking of? I've learned all I care to about him."

The Prince drove back alone.

* * *

§ VIII

Rome and Florence—Death of Dermide

PAULINE and the Prince set out for Rome on November 14. Napoleon, still angry, refused to accredit his sister directly, but gave instructions that either Joseph or Madame Letitia should write to Borghese's mother commending Pauline to her interest and care. And yet, in spite of his wounded feelings, he could not repress his affection for this willful, heedless sister. On the eve of her departure he sent from the midst of his army at Boulogne a brotherly letter of good counsel.

"Madame la Princesse Borghèse: I shall be away a few days longer. But the bad season is approaching and the Alps will shortly be coated in ice; therefore pray start on your journey to Rome. Let your conduct be distinguished by gentleness, amiability towards everybody, and an extreme consideration for all those ladies who are either related to, or united by friendship with, the house of your husband. More will be expected from you than from others. Above all, see that you conform to the customs of the country; never decry anything; admire everything, and do not say, 'We do this or that

better in Paris.' Evince respect and devotion for the Holy Father, to whom I myself am much attached, and whose sincerity of life renders him worthy of his high position. The thing I shall like best to hear concerning you, will be that you are good. The only nation to whom you must not show hospitality is the English, so long as we continue in a state of war; and in any case you must never admit them to your intimacy. Love your husband, make your household happy, and above all do not be frivolous or capricious. You are twenty-four years old, and must behave in a mature and sensible manner. I love you and shall always be glad to hear of your happiness. Your brother, Bonaparte."

Admirable advice, but vain. Paulette could not follow it and be herself; and if she had not been herself she would have had no history.

At Florence, where the Prince was much more at home than in his vast palazzo in the Eternal City, they stayed for a few days in the Salviati Palace. Pauline met the Florentine nobility at a banquet in the Pitti Palace at which the honors accorded her were those usually reserved for royalty. Driving out in the late afternoons to the Cascine Park, the city's rendezvous of fashion, she created a sensation in her splendid carriage with her negro servant dressed like a Turk behind her.

Rome was reached on December 9. The Borgheses welcomed Pauline with every mark of affection and good will. Cardinal Consalvi, the Papal Secretary of

State, was among the very first to pay his respects in person, and he bore with him a message from the Pope expressing the wish to see her at the earliest possible moment. Pauline pleaded the need of a brief rest to recover from the fatigues of the long journey from Paris before presenting herself to His Holiness. Some of her finest gowns had not yet reached Rome! The delay was brief. Escorted by Cardinal Fesch and the Dowager Princess Borghese, she was presented on December 13 to the Holy Father who bestowed on her the highest possible distinction by admitting her to his private apartments and not having the audience take place in the Vatican garden as was the rule even with ladies of the highest rank. The Pope was enchanted with her (after all, he was a man as well as a priest), and she with him. At the close of the interview he made her a present of a beautiful chaplet of beads and a superb cameo. Pius the Seventh and Pauline became excellent friends; in the years ahead of them each was able to be of service to the other on more than one occasion, and their friendship was never diminished by the political difficulties that arose between Napoleon and the Pontiff who crowned him Emperor of the French.

Two great receptions were given for her in the Borghese Palace to which came the nobility of Rome, the diplomatic corps, members of the Sacred College, statesmen, and titled foreigners; all were enthusiastic in praise of the gay and lovely new Princess. Cardinal

Consalvi grew lyrical in attempting to describe his impressions: "She is the most gracious and pleasing lady imaginable; her manners are exquisite; in her are united the utmost charm of mind and body." Judging from the way she captivated them one might have thought Pauline had sought to make lovers of their Eminences. Touched and flattered by the universal favor with which his sister had been received, Napoleon's anger, never long-lived where Pauline was concerned, melted away, and on January 13, 1804, he wrote to the Pope officially recommending her, and adding: "I beg Your Holiness to be kind to Madame Paulette, and from time to time give her the benefit of your helpful counsel."

The older, more stable organism of Roman Society called for the exercise of more intelligence, self-discipline, and finesse than the parvenu, self-conscious circles of post-Revolutionary Paris. One had to accept more rigid conventions, endure a more tedious ceremonial routine, observe traditional usages more strictly. But if one adhered to the code, a large liberty of action and conduct might be enjoyed by the lighter-minded members of society. If love were their dominant interest, the whole gamut of its frivolous or forbidden phases could be safely played behind a veil of well-bred, understood silence. Pauline intuitively adjusted herself to the external requirements of the new environment. She crossed the social gulf between Paris and Rome like a bird on the wing. Her education and social

experience were vastly increased, and she mastered the air of a veritable *grande dame* that was hers forever afterwards whenever she chose to wear it. But once the novelty of the new life had worn off, her native impatience of restrictions set in, and with it restlessness and discontent. She longed for the faster pace, the quickly changing scenes, the breath-catching thrills that Paris alone gave. The fixity of Roman social custom, the rigor of its routine, became daily irritants that her willfulness would not suffer. In such a mood, Pauline could make life unendurable for all around her—and did. By the end of March, she had created such a difficult situation that Fesch was obliged to report it to Napoleon who at once wrote Pauline in his most official and reproving manner:

"Madame and Dear Sister: I have learned that you have not had the good sense to accommodate yourself to the manners and customs of the City of Rome; that you have shown disdain for its people; and have your eyes constantly turned toward Paris. Although I am engrossed in affairs of the greatest importance, I am taking time to let you know my wishes, in the hope that you will conform to them.

"Love your husband and his family; show an engaging disposition; accept the ways of Rome, and dismiss from your mind any expectation that if, at your age, you allow yourself to be led astray by bad advice, you can count on any assistance from me. As to Paris, be assured you will find no support here, for I will

never receive you without your husband. If you fall out with him, it will be entirely your own fault, and France will be forbidden you; you will lose your happiness and my friendship."

The brother's bark was worse than his bite, however, for he answered Fesch by the same post as follows:

"I don't believe half of what you say in your letter. But it does annoy me to think that Madame Borghese does not realize how important it is for her happiness that she should accept the ways of Rome as they are. She should consider the esteem of that great city a gratifying reward to one so well born as she is. I have let her know my views clearly and precisely; I hope she will act upon them. Her mother, when she arrives, will be able to give her further good advice. And you may tell her from me that she is no longer beautiful, and will be less so in a few years; that for the rest of her life she ought to strive to be good and well thought of. At the same time, her husband ought to remember the way she has been accustomed to live in Paris, and allow her something of the freedom the women of our country have. But she must endeavor to please her husband's family and all the great personages in Rome, and maintain about her a tone and style worthy of her rank, and not indulge in those bad manners which good taste frowns on, even in the most frivolous circles of the capital."

That gibe about Pauline's no longer being beautiful was surely a bit of long distance fraternal teasing. Had

he told her this when they were alone together it would have been the instant signal for one of their private rough and tumble frolics. The rest, of course, was the usual sane and experienced counsel of parents, elder brothers and husbands to volatile daughters, sisters and wives. Napoleon could do no less, but it may be doubted if, in his heart, he really expected Pauline to mend her ways. As a move in the direction of discouraging any idea she might be harboring of a sudden return to Paris, he tried to buy the Hôtel Charost from Pauline's agent. He imagined this would simply mean paying back to Joseph the 100,000 francs Pauline had borrowed, reimbursing her for the expense of repairs and refurnishing, and assuming responsibility for the amount of the purchase price still due Madame de Charost. But the agent, well aware of Pauline's fondness for her Paris home and desire to retain it, put a price of half a million francs on it, estimated her outlay at over 100,000 francs, and resorted to all the dilatory tactics known to his profession in order to prevent the transaction from taking place. Napoleon finally gave up, and "The Nest of Pauline" remained hers to fly back to when opportunity came.

In Rome, Pauline's discontent increased daily, accentuated by a regrettable estrangement between herself and the Dowager Princess. At last, on the pretext that her health necessitated it, she gained permission to go with the Prince to the baths at Pisa. In less than a fortnight she was off to Florence, where the Queen

of Etruria received her again with the greatest distinction and the etiquette usual at the meeting of sovereigns. At the race course, on St. John the Baptist's day, Pauline appeared in the royal pavilion, where, surrounded by the ministers and entire court of Etruria, she looked, in her magnificent Paris gown, more regal than the queen herself. Early in July she left the heat and glare of Florence for the picturesque Baths of Lucca and the cool, shaded valley of the Lima. All the foreigners at this delightful summer resort, particularly the Russians, were soon at her feet, and the members of the diplomatic corps in Florence deserted their posts to come and pay court to her. Sunshine and adulation quickly restored her amiability and good nature. She received everyone, went everywhere in the most democratic manner. She danced with the mayor at a public ball. The Lucca nobility looked down from their boxes, horrified, but what else could be expected of a Princess whose doors were open to all the world and who entertained the local officials without inquiry as to their genealogies?

This delectable summer holiday was brusquely interrupted by the death of Dermide, whom his mother had left at Frascati in the care of servants. Taken suddenly ill on August 11 with fever accompanied by epileptic convulsions, the little boy died three days later. Pauline received the news while at a ball. She became on the instant a grief-stricken mother and half-swooned, while

simultaneously through her brain danced the thought that the death of Dermide threw open the way to Paris.

"My poor little boy," wept the Princess. "If only I had been with him I might have saved him. I would have nursed him as I nursed his father. Why did they not tell me he was ill?"

Friends consoled her with the statement that even if she had heard of Dermide's illness on the day it occurred she could not have reached him before his death, for Rome was at least thirty-three hours' fast traveling from Lucca.

After a few days of dramatic grieving and subdued acceptance of the sympathy and condolences poured out by her Lucca admirers, Pauline returned to Florence. There the Queen of Etruria hastened to her side, showered attentions upon her, and spent entire evenings with her. But the part was too wearisome for Pauline to play long, and she had, moreover, discovered that as Dermide had not reached the age of seven she was not obliged to wear mourning. Within a fortnight she was attending receptions and gala events at court and writing letter after letter pointing out the necessity of bringing her son's body back to France for burial beside his father at Montgobert.

At the beginning of October, Napoleon, worn out by her persistent importunity, granted her request to return. At Paris, the great ceremony of the Coronation was impending.

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§ IX

The Hereditary Succession—Family Quarrels—Coronation

"I ALWAYS intended," said Napoleon to his brother Joseph, "to end the Revolution by the establishment of heredity; but I thought that such a step could not be taken before the lapse of five or six years." Events had moved at greater speed than even his starled genius had dared imagine: in 1799 First Consul; in 1802 the Consulate for Life; Emperor of the French by decree of the famous Senatus-Consultum of May 18, 1804—thus swiftly had the steps toward the goal followed each other.

Under the new monarchical constitution of the Empire, the hereditary succession was based on the principles of the Salic Law, that is, it passed from male to male in the order of primogeniture. As Napoleon had no children by Josephine he was given the right to adopt his successor if he chose. If he left no heirs, legitimate or adoptive, the crown was to pass to Joseph and Louis, and their heirs. His other brothers were excluded, and his sisters, under the law, automatically debarred. Over this question of the succession, Na-

poleon's insufferable family raged like angry hornets. Josephine, knowing she could never have another child, endeavored to persuade Napoleon to recognize the son of her daughter Hortense and Louis Bonaparte as first in the line of direct succession. Joseph hotly opposed this as endangering *his* rights; and the sullen Louis objected to the proposal because he suspected Napoleon of incestuous relations with Hortense. Napoleon's fondness for Charles Napoleon, who of course was indubitably Louis's own son, was also the cause of bitter feeling on the part of Caroline Bonaparte, who had married Murat. Playing with the child one day, Napoleon had said to him:

"Do you know, my little man, some day you may be a king?"

"And what about Achille?" instantly asked Murat, referring to his son.

"Achille!" replied Napoleon. "Oh! he will make a good soldier."

And, being perfectly aware that Caroline was strongly supporting Joseph and Louis in their opposition to the plan of his adopting Hortense's son, he added:

"In any case, my poor child, I advise you never to accept any food your cousins may offer you."

Neither Caroline nor Murat ever forgave this remark.

Joseph and Louis had been raised to the rank of Princes, but at the time the Empire was proclaimed

no change was made in the status of the Emperor's sisters. When it dawned on the latter that their brothers' wives would become Princesses, their vanity was hurt to the quick. Caroline, in a storm of tears, bitterly assailed Napoleon, accusing him of condemning his sisters to obscurity while he lavished titles and honors on strangers. An angry argument followed until Caroline, finding neither tears nor reproaches of any avail, fainted away at her brother's feet. Napoleon gave way. The next day, the official *Moniteur* carried the announcement: "It has been the custom in the past to give French Princes and Princesses the title of Imperial Highness. *The sisters of the Emperor will bear this same designation.*" Thus Pauline, on her return to Paris, found herself a French as well as an Italian Princess. But neither she nor her sisters knew that the only women in France who had ever before been personally invested with such rank and dignity were the mistresses of certain kings.

The Emperor had still another, even more torturing experience to undergo before the coronation. The point was still unsettled as to whether Josephine should be crowned and anointed with him. She passionately desired it; it would be a new and powerful guarantee against that haunting anxiety of her life—a divorce. But suspending their personal quarrels, Napoleon's brothers and sisters closed ranks and strove determinedly to convince him that never again would the time and circumstances be so favorable or logical for carrying out his

oft-repeated threat to separate from his wife. They gave him no peace; their excitement and importunity created wild confusion around him. "Dans la famille Bonaparte, la zizanie régnait plus que jamais."

Josephine unexpectedly entered the room one day when Napoleon's sisters, Pauline leading, were plying him with arguments, vehemently demanding that he get rid of her. They threw at him every indiscretion, every infidelity of which Josephine had been accused or known to be guilty. They repeated every obscenity and slander invented against her by the Royalist gutter press and the English paid hacks. Napoleon attempted to stop the flood of accusation. His sisters' voices, shrill with rage, overbore his denials of their charges and his attempts to defend Josephine. So heated was the discussion, the presence of Josephine went unnoticed for a few moments, but not until after she had heard some of the worst of what had been said. Her face was aflame and distorted as she rushed toward the angry group. Stung to frenzy and panic-stricken at seeing what she took to be Napoleon's hesitation under the verbal onslaught of his sisters, Josephine completely lost her head and poured out a torrent of invective in the language of a fishwife.

"You lie, you lie, you dirty little pig!" she screamed at Pauline, and lifted her hand as if to strike, but Napoleon stepped quickly between the two women. Caroline and Élisa retreated across the room.

"She is a liar, Napoleon, and you know it," continued

Josephine at the top of her voice. "And who is she, the filthy beast, to cast up such vile things at me when all Paris says and believes she has slept with you time and time again!"

There was a moment of horrified silence.

"Be silent, woman, you are mad, insane," burst out Napoleon, at last completely beside himself with anger.

"We *shall* separate now," he went on excitedly. "My career, my plans, reasons of state, would all make it necessary some time. But I have hesitated, I have postponed it, because I loved you. Now you have ruined everything. I cannot love you after your saying, even thinking such beastliness of me."

"Then why should you listen to such horrible things of me? I swear they are not true! These women are trying to poison your mind against me; how ——"

Napoleon gave a harsh laugh. "Am I a fool? I know everything about you: your lovers, your debts, your silly efforts to deceive me. I cared nothing for these things, because I loved you. I know they hate you. Have I not known my family have hated you ever since the day we were married? I told them they lied about you; that they only wanted more power for themselves. And then you rush in and fling this mud at me! . . . No, I will endure no more of this. The Senate shall decree our separation. I will see you no more. I will be crowned Emperor alone. Send for your children. They must know my resolution!"

He slashed at a bell-cord and ordered the servant

who responded to summon Hortense and Eugène Beauharnais immediately.

Turning and twisting his hands behind his back in nervous agitation, Napoleon paced the room, torn and distracted by a flow of conflicting emotions. Never before had this squabbling, vindictive family of his put him on quite so torturous a rack.

Hortense and Eugène were ushered into the room by a lackey. Napoleon, his voice trembling with anger, informed them of what had occurred, and announced his intention of separating from their mother and ordering her into retirement. Though their faces showed painfully the shock and grief the announcement caused them, both declared they would follow their mother and share her banishment. Together they crossed the room and stood beside her.

Josephine, the violence of her anger spent, sat huddled on a couch, a pitiful figure now of grief and hopeless submission. Little choking, uncontrollable sobs escaped her, as Hortense and Eugène endeavored to calm and comfort her.

Caroline, Élisa, and Pauline exchanged glances of unconcealed triumph.

Napoleon, standing in the center of the room, viewed the scene with moist eyes, heart and mind in tumult. Utter silence reigned for a length of time whose exact duration none of them ever after was able to estimate. But during it something happened to Napoleon that caused in him a complete, overwhelming revulsion of

feeling. Was it the striking contrast presented by the two groups before him? Was it the victory and satisfaction betrayed by his sisters' faces, and in those revealing glances his swift eye had intercepted? At length he broke the silence, released the tension of the situation with an incoherent exclamation. Striding across the intervening space between them, he caught up the crushed and weeping Josephine in his arms and passionately assured her he would never have the strength to part from her.

"You *shall* be crowned with me, my Josephine," he cried. "And the Holy Father himself shall consecrate you by my side."

Rounding on his sisters, who stood aghast and furious at the amazing turn events had taken, he hurled at them a broadside of stinging, staccato sentences.

"You are jealous of my wife, of Eugène, of Hortense, of all that is near and dear to me. I love her and these children; *they* are always trying to please me. Are you? I love Hortense, yes, I love her; she and her brother always take my side, even against their mother, when she gets angry about some woman or such trivial matter. I'd leave a Council of State at any time to see Hortense, if she wanted me. But not you, Caroline. With you it's always a pitched battle. To bring a chit of a woman of my own family to reason, I have to deliver harangues as long as if she were the Senate and the Council of State together."

He paused for breath. The sisters returned his wrathful looks with sullen stares. He went on.

"You say my wife is unfaithful, that the attentions of her children are forced. What of it? What harm have they, has she ever done you? They treat me like an old uncle, and it makes the pleasant side of my life. I am getting old; I'm thirty-six, and I need rest. Josephine is a good wife. Her debts—what do they amount to? Not half what you squeeze from me. She merely plays the Empress a little, has diamonds, fine dresses, the trifles of her age. If I create her Empress, it is but bare justice. Yes, she shall be crowned! She shall be crowned if it costs me two hundred thousand men!"

* * *

On the day of the Coronation the Princesses and the wives of Joseph and Louis bore her train as Josephine advanced to the altar. Napoleon's smile greeted her as she came forward, and when she knelt down, the tears she could not repress fell upon her clasped hands as they were raised to Heaven—and Napoleon. He took great pains to arrange the little crown, which was placed over her tiara of diamonds, and they both appeared to enjoy one of those fleeting moments of pure felicity unique in a lifetime.

* * *

§ X

Pauline's Discontent with the Prince— Her Household Establishment

PAULINE'S indifference to the Prince and her flirtations with other men had been openly displayed during their first winter in Rome. There is little doubt that the Prince was dull, and had no gifts wherewith to entertain or interest his fickle but exacting Princess. It is known that he was very patient and showed her constant respect and affection. Only the extremely high character of General Thiébault justifies the citation of his assertion that the Prince was impotent: "Le mariage du Prince Camille Borghèse avec Mme. Leclerc acheva de révèler qu'il ne pouvait avoir ni femme, ni maitresse. Se donner à lui était ne se donner à personne." Others suggest that his fault in Pauline's eyes lay in his not being a sexual athlete, a Casanova.

After their return from Italy, Borghese seriously contemplated securing a divorce, but fear of Napoleon restrained him; the Emperor would not listen to the word. Pauline begged her brother to find a way of ridding her of her husband, of whom she was now thoroughly sick and tired and could not bear near her. The

most he would do was to commission the Prince a major in the mounted Grenadier Guards, and see that he was assigned to military duties away from Paris. After the coronation Napoleon created Borghese a French citizen, and gave him the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor, together with one of the Orders of the Golden Fleece received from the King of Spain. One feels that these high honors, so disproportionate to the Prince's real merits, represented on Napoleon's part an effort to make some amends for the unofficial exile into which Pauline's insistence had compelled him to send his brother-in-law. Borghese took great pride in his new and splendid decorations, but he would much rather have remained in Paris and worn them on his Guard's uniform there, than in Boulogne or other distant military encampments. Pauline, so long as he was at a distance from her, could put up with the inconvenience of being his wife, for she shared his magnificent income and bore his princely name.

As an Imperial Highness it was incumbent on Pauline to maintain an establishment befitting that rank. The mode of life, dinners, receptions, balls, and the personnel of her official household must harmonize with her station as sister of the Emperor. The most important personage in such an establishment was its first chamberlain, and it was some time before the Princess found a man who met all the requirements of this position. Her final choice was M. Clermont Tonnerre, a Duke under the old monarchy, and head of an illus-

trious family in Dauphiné, but so impoverished by his services as a volunteer in the Royalist Armée de Condé, that he had to hire his first court costume, and was still obliged to borrow such suits from low-born persons who possessed several of them. Genial in disposition, with a gift for light conversation and merry turns of phrase, his social qualifications were of the best. He was ready to offer his services to anyone, but expected an adequate recompense—as was only just.

The chief equerry was M. Louis Marquet de Montbreton, a gay and versatile gentleman, equipped with all the talents requisite for creating an agreeable atmosphere around him. If Madame Junot's description of the lady of honor, Madame de Champagny, is to be relied on, Pauline may almost be suspected of choosing her in order to provide the most violent contrast to herself. "I have met with few women," wrote Laura, "so indifferent to their person as was Madame de Champagny. She was the most worthy but wearisome, the most tender yet least feminine woman I have ever known." Of the ladies-in-waiting, the most striking and distinguished, in both dress and appearance, was the Marquise de Bréhan, a handsome blonde, with very small feet, a skin of satin, beautiful teeth, and, in addition, a lively wit that never gave offense. Madame de Barral, another of the ladies-in-waiting, was also handsome, sprightly, and attractive in manner. She has the rare distinction of being one of the few women who persistently and successfully resisted Napoleon's amor-

ous advances. The *lectrice*, or reader, Mademoiselle Millo, afterwards Countess of Saluces, was intellectually the most brilliant woman of the household. Well-educated and well-read, she could discuss serious subjects with knowledge and power, and pass from them with ease to light comments on the dress, trifles, and amusements of the hour. She was the author of a once popular historical novel, *Foscarini, ou les Patriciens de Venise.* Other posts in Pauline's official establishment included: a First Almoner (a position later held by Cardinal Spina, Archbishop of Genoa), two chaplains, a private secretary, a chief steward, a physician, surgeon, and pharmacist.

With this gay and talented group forming a little court around her, the Princess Pauline spent the summer of 1805 in Le Petit Trianon at Versailles. Alarming symptoms that seemed to threaten serious pulmonary trouble had led her physicians to prescribe the country air for her. Napoleon and Josephine came out for brief visits; Pauline gave little parties, entertaining herself and guests by having the fountains and a military band play for them. Enchanted with the place, she passed the season there in a delicious state of *dolce far niente.* Irresistibly the question rises, did memories of that other mistress of the Trianons and "Queen of Trinkets," Marie Antoinette, ever recur to the mind of Pauline Bonaparte as she strolled along those shaded avenues, breathing the fragrance from the lovely gardens?

* * *

BOOK THREE

§ I

Season of 1805–6—Pauline's Salon

DURING the winter of 1805-6 Pauline opened her salon in the Hôtel Charost and throughout the season it was one of the most brilliant focal points of Parisian social life. On January 26, 1806, Napoleon returned from his victorious Austerlitz campaign whose superb simplicity of design, speed and energy of execution, excelled even that which had led him to victory in 1796 on the plains of Piedmont. Whenever and wherever the new Charlemagne appeared in public, the populace of Paris welcomed him with outbursts of frenzied joy, and shouts, a thousand times repeated, of "*Vive l'Empereur.*"

Society signaled his return by a series of spectacular balls and receptions given by ambassadors, cabinet ministers, the great officers of state, the nobility, and rich bankers. Everywhere, the Emperor found his favorite sister acclaimed as queen of fashion; every evening, at home or abroad, she gleamed like the evening star in the sparkling firmament of the Imperial scene. And Napoleon knew that throughout the time he had been at war, Pauline had required the Arch-Chancellor Cam-

bacérès to send her instant reports of him the moment official despatches arrived from the front. The slightest delay threw her into panic fears for his safety.

Supported by a household whose personnel was more aristocratic and socially experienced than that of any other member of the Imperial family, Pauline reigned in the Hôtel Charost an acknowledged leader of the new social world of the Empire. Her ladies were distinguished for their loveliness and merry spirits, her gentlemen bore historic names long famous under the *ancien régime*. Her parties and receptions had just that shade of difference from others which it is the ambition of every hostess to achieve, and invitations to them were eagerly sought. Spiteful things were said, naturally enough, by social rivals or persons failing to receive invitations. Madame de Rémusat, for example, throws a poisoned dart at Pauline over the shoulders of the Princess's charming ladies, saying, "Her conduct cast an unfortunate reflection upon the young and pretty women who formed her court." The memoirist d'Espinchal, who was not of Pauline's circle, compares her evening gatherings unfavorably with those of Queen Hortense to which he had free access: "Ses soirées sont un peu décolletées et d'un genre tout à fait différent de celles de la Reine." Pauline, however, was now too firmly established, socially and personally, to be disturbed by such Parthian arrows.

The preoccupation of her daytime hours was the cult of her beauty. To this her devotion was as rigorous and

absorbing as that of an artist intent on creating a masterpiece. At ten in the morning a maid drew the curtains of the spacious, fragrant bedroom, letting in the sunshine that played upon the bronze inlay work of the bed, the crystal scent bottles, the silver-mounted combs and brushes on the dressing-table. Indolent always, and sometimes really weak when one of her genuine illnesses attacked her, Pauline had persuaded herself that she must be carried to and from her bath. This delicate service was performed at the Hôtel Charost by her famous negro servant, Paul. When she first introduced this startling innovation into the ritual of her toilette, friends protested, saying that it was not decent for a negro to be brought into such intimate contact with her person.

"But why not?" asked Pauline. "A negro is not a man; he does not matter."

Continued objections finally led her to concede something to the proprieties.

"Well," she said. "Of course I wish to be correct in such things. You are shocked, I suppose, because Paul is young and unmarried. I can soon arrange that."

Summoning Paul and one of the white kitchen maids to her presence, she said:

"Now listen carefully and make sure you understand what I want you to do. I am going to make you very happy. I wish you both to marry, and to marry each other."

Paul grinned, showing his white teeth to their fullest

extent. The pitiful creature from below stairs mustered sufficient courage to make a frightened protest:

"But, Madame. It is a sacrilege. He is a black, and I shall be disgraced."

"There are to be no 'buts' about it," answered Pauline sternly. "Within eight days you must be married. I will see my almoner about it and he will name the priest."

Obediently the helpless menials submitted to their mistress's orders. At the end of eight days they reappeared, the bride resuming her duties in the scullery and the groom his in attending the Princess at her bath. The required conventions were now, in the eyes of the irrepressible Pauline, duly and properly observed.

Lazily immersed in the soothing flood of carefully heated water and twenty liters of milk the bath required, Pauline sometimes graciously permitted her lovers and a few favorite admirers to be present until Paul was summoned to carry her out. She felt nothing but pride in revealing the beauty of her body to eyes capable of appreciating its superlative loveliness—and she knew that her goddess-like bust and shoulders could never be seen to greater advantage than in her bath.

In her boudoir she was handed, after the manner of old French royalty, one of the famous chemises in which she walked about in the presence of intimates or sat before the mirror to complete her toilette. The deft hands of a maid arranged the black locks in the style chosen for the hour or day, while Pauline's own prac-

ticed fingers applied just the right tint to the olive cheeks, rouged the soft lips, and darkened the eyebrows and lashes with a special Oriental preparation. The almond paste, cucumber salve, and *lait du rose* each performed its destined office, and attar of roses was then sprayed over the exquisite body. Another garment or two, and the Princess appeared in the ravishing *déshabille* in which she received morning visitors none of whom ever forgot the vision of this incarnation of Aphrodite.

The praise of one woman's beauty by other women in sufficiently rare to render such eulogy, when it occurs, doubly significant, stamping it with the hallmark of indisputable truth. "The Princess Pauline Borghese," records the Countess Potocka, "represented to perfection the type of classic beauty seen in Greek statues. No other woman would have dared compete with her. With the most refined and regular features it is possible to imagine, she also possessed an equally perfect form and limbs." "Her statue by Canova, *moulded from herself*, is that of an enchanted being," wrote the Duchess of Abrantès. "It has been asserted that the artist corrected defects in the leg and bust. I have seen the legs of the Princess, as all have who were moderately intimate with her,—and I have observed no such defects. Indeed, their perfection may be inferred from her walk, which was slow, because she was so often indisposed, but the grace of her movement showed that the members were perfectly formed."

The Earl of Jersey, who had been privileged to see it bare, said, "Her foot looks as if it had never worn a shoe." The poet Chateaubriand bears similar testimony to the dainty loveliness of her feet which he, too, saw on one occasion in Rome when he called to deliver some special shoes sent her from Paris. The Princess received him in her dressing room, and finished her toilette in his presence, listening to his news and gossip from the French capital. "The slippers which she put on her young and pretty feet were but for a moment to tread this ancient soil," he wrote in his reminiscences. "Had she lived in the days of Raphael, he would have represented her in the forms of one of those Loves that recline on the backs of the lions in the Farnese Palace, and the same languor would have carried off both painter and model." The figures on the medal struck in Pauline's honor at the Paris Mint show the lines of her body when standing completely nude. On the obverse is her head in antique profile; on the reverse are the linked forms of the three Graces naked. Pauline was the model for all three, the drawings having been made from life by the versatile Baron Denon, "ce faunesque amateur de la beauté," an artist upon whom Napoleon bestowed high honors and appointments. Denon for years kept on his library table a plaster cast of Pauline's hand.

Canova was at the height of his career and fame when he produced the monumental statue of Pauline as Venus Victrix, lying, nearly nude, on a couch, hold-

MEDAL STRUCK AT PARIS MINT IN HONOR OF PAULINE

ing in her hand the golden apple awarded her by Paris as the loveliest of the goddesses. Even Canova, to whom the fairest women of the age had sat, trembled with emotion as the undraped form of the Princess lay outstretched before his eyes. The operation of pressing the wet clay on her soft and rounded flesh called for the greatest care and delicacy of handling. There were moments when the sculptor's hands faltered in the process and he hesitated to go on.

"But why do you stop?" exclaimed Pauline. "What is the matter?"

"Princess, I am afraid of falling in love with my model," replied Canova.

One of her ladies later expressed astonishment that she could bear to pose in such a state of nudity.

"Why not?" asked Pauline quite seriously. "It was not cold. There was a fire in the studio."

After the bath and the beautifying Pauline turned to the busy little world of tradespeople over which she ruled—the world of dressmakers, embroiderers, purveyors of lace and linen, perfumers, those who provided her shoes, gloves, cloaks, and hats, all as solemn as Cabinet Ministers and as prone to exaggerate their importance. As one of the women who led and set the fashions of the day, Pauline's choice of styles, colors, and materials was a matter of high consequence. Nothing was correct if she had not approved and adopted it; she was the one who launched the new creations that the great dressmakers submitted to her impeccable

judgment. The world bowed to her taste and decisions; even rivals acknowledged her supremacy in the art of dress.

One is grateful to those industrious scholars who have hunted so laboriously in dusty archives and cob-web-hung muniment rooms, revealing for us from yellowing documents the items of Pauline's resplendent wardrobe. Through them we are able to picture something of the daintiness and splendor with which she clothed herself and framed her beauty. Velvet gowns of green and white; rose satin dresses trimmed with point lace or embroidered with pearls; a magnificent gown of point d'Alençon that cost 6,000 francs; a white satin dress with underskirt of gold-fringed green satin; and forty less expensive gowns bought from la petite Leblanc instead of the more famous and expensive Léroy; gorgeous cloaks of plush and rose satin, of canary colored velvet and white satin; a Scotch cap of blue taffeta with a bouquet of gilliflowers; underwear of the finest lace, cambric, and muslin; fur-lined slippers, daytime and evening gloves of every variety. These are some of the things which she wore when men came to the *Nid de Pauline* to pay court to her or when she went afield to conquer.

* * *

§ II

Pauline Created Duchess of Guastalla

AFTER Austerlitz, as at all previous stages of Napoleon's progress, a shower of honors, gifts, and titles fell upon his exigent and clamorous family. Joseph became King of Naples and Louis King of Holland. The insatiable Caroline, incessantly soliciting for Murat, who was putty in her hands, reaped a rich harvest from the generosity of her Imperial brother. He gave her the Élysée Palace as a residence and 240,000 francs as an annual allowance. In the space of a month, Murat was given the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor, and created a Grand Dignity, Grand Admiral, and Prince of the Empire. The salaries and emoluments attached to his various honors and positions, with Caroline's allowance, reached a total of 1,500,000 francs. Finally, on March 15, 1806, Murat was created Grand Duke of Berg and Cleves, and Caroline achieved her ambition to become a reigning princess. Even then she was not satisfied. Élisa, knowing Napoleon's indifference to her and contempt for her insignificant husband, desired a sphere outside France. She was created Princess of Piombino and Duchess of Lucca.

Her several grants and allowances from the French Treasury amounted to 900,000 francs in a single year.

On the same day that Caroline became Grand Duchess of Berg, Napoleon created Pauline Duchess of Guastalla, a little Italian principality that had come under his jurisdiction upon the formation of the Kingdom of Etruria. He did this of his own volition and not in response to any demand by Pauline, for he is reported to have said many times that she never asked him for anything. At this particular time she certainly wanted no distant duchies: she wanted to remain in Paris; and she had nothing to ask for her Prince except that he should be kept away from her. If she had any request to make of the Emperor it was to be allowed to reign over her salon in the Hôtel Charost, to pass the summers at health resorts, and never be sent back to Rome with Borghese. Napoleon was probably well aware of this. His action in giving her the Duchy of Guastalla as and when he did may have been partly due to a natural wish not to seem to be deliberately slighting his favorite sister while showing such marked favor to other members of the family; and partly with a view to providing her with the means whereby she might acquire an estate of her own in France of a character suited to her rank. It seems clear that she was acting upon a suggestion made by him when, within two months after her creation as Duchess, she made arrangements to retain the title and cede the duchy to the Kingdom of Italy for a very substantial monetary

consideration. "You will find herewith," wrote the Emperor to Pauline on May 24, 1806, "the decree I have just drawn up relating to the cession of your principality of Guastalla to the Kingdom of Italy. You will see that my Italian treasury will pay you 6,000,000 francs of which 1,500,000 francs will be paid in July and the balance within three years. . . . See that your man of business takes up this matter at once." The cession was officially confirmed on August 14, Napoleon settling the terms in a manner highly advantageous to the French Treasury. From this transaction a French historian, much given to moralizing, draws the amusing conclusion that it was Pauline's nature "to prefer fortune, the source of pleasure, to greatness, the satisfaction of pride." Granting the obvious relation between wealth and pleasure, the implication that Pauline rejected "greatness" in giving up Guastalla is comic. That little pawn on the Napoleonic chessboard was only about fifty square miles in extent, with a population of less than ten thousand, and a diminutive capital containing a cathedral, eight churches, a college, and a library. Pauline's ambition could hardly have been called great, had such a possession satisfied it; while as a stage on which to play the only rôles for which her talents fitted her, Guastalla certainly left much to be desired.

Pauline never at any time made the selfish demands upon Napoleon that his other sisters and brothers did. She never importuned him for crowns or titles, money

or high place. Prince Metternich quotes her as saying: "I do not care for crowns: if I had wished for one I should have had it; but I left that taste to my relatives." Her genuine affection for Napoleon and the hero-worship of which she made him the lifelong object, absolutely excluded the petty jealousy, mercenary motives, and cheap ambitions that characterized his other blood relations in their attitude toward him and the use they made of him. Pauline, alone of the family, sensed the real greatness of her brother, and it was from her deep and abiding love for him that her intuitive belief in his genius was born. For this, much should surely be forgiven the one whom many delight to call "the prettiest, giddiest, and wickedest of the Bonapartes."

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§ III

Plombières—Louis de Forbin

TOWARDS the end of July, Pauline, with the chief members of her household and servants, set out for Plombières-les-Bains, the curative properties of whose mineral waters made it a popular health resort. Besides a sedan chair and the litter in which she reclined at length when wearied of sitting, the special bathtub for her milk ablutions was taken along. She planned to pass a night at Bar in the home of M. Leclerc, prefect of the Meuse and a brother of her first husband. He was notified of her coming and given full instructions regarding her bathing requirements. The bewildered prefect ordered out his Municipal Guards and sent them to scour the neighboring villages in search of the necessary milk. When the Princess arrived, some of the soldiers were still straggling in, laden with bottles and jugs of the indispensable bathing accessory. After greeting her brother-in-law from the cushions of her luxurious litter, Pauline, who never would walk unless compelled to, requested him to carry her to the apartments prepared for her.

"And my bath?" she inquired.

"It is all ready for you, Your Highness."

"And my shower afterwards?"

"That is very difficult; we have no apparatus for a shower bath, Your Highness."

"Then just make a hole in the ceiling, right over where you have placed the bathtub. Forgive the trouble I am causing you, dear brother, but my health absolutely requires these things."

The good prefect did his utmost to meet the unusual needs of his embarrassing guest, who left him the next morning with gracious words of thanks, and his best bedroom permeated with the clinging odor of sour milk.

At Plombières, Pauline had a special palanquin built, after the model of ancient Spanish and Italian vehicles of this type, in order to make her mountain travel easier. M. de Montbreton, the first equerry, spent a month vainly endeavoring to train four big Auvergne mules to draw the strange conveyance. The project had to be given up, greatly to the disappointment of Pauline who had taken an enthusiastic interest in the new toy.

She left Plombières early in September after an agreeable stay, with her health markedly improved. She could alleviate her ills and build up sufficient strength for brief periods of social activity or pleasure, but the fundamental causes of her physical disabilities could not, apparently, be eradicated.

From Plombières her immediate destination was Paris in order to bid good-bye to Napoleon who was

on the eve of leaving for the war with Prussia—a campaign that added the glorious names of Jena and Auerstädt to the roll of his victories. She had also, for form's sake, to say farewell to Borghese, now a major-general, and eager to win glory with the Emperor. Of late, he had been much less troublesome to Pauline. During the spring stormy scenes had occurred between them. Borghese's jealousy had been aroused by the attentions paid Pauline by a certain Comte de L., and the noticeable frequency with which she received him. The Prince objected violently to a continuance of these visits and demanded that she cease this and other indiscretions. The result of the outbreak was that Pauline made it clear to Prince Borghese that she had not the slightest affection for him, that he had been but a minor episode in her past life, and that he meant nothing to her in the present or future. Convinced at last of the hopelessness of the situation, the Prince gave up any further effort to win her love or control her actions. He resumed his bachelor life, racing and hunting with his horses, and seeking feminine consolation elsewhere. He continued to participate in the amusements and entertainments of the Imperial court; Pauline stayed away from them on the pretext of ill-health. They appeared together on formal and official occasions, but only because the Emperor commanded it.

After saying her adieux to Napoleon and her husband, Pauline settled herself for the autumn in the country-house of her brother Louis at Saint-Leu-

Taverny, some nineteen kilometers north of Paris, where she remained until the season opened in the capital.

A principal cause of Pauline's pleasurable sojourn at Plombières had been her first meeting with a man destined to exercise considerable influence over both her heart and her intellect. Louis Nicolas Philippe Auguste de Forbin was at this time about thirty years of age. A Knight of Malta while still in his cradle, he came of an illustrious house that had given France grand seneschals, governors of provinces, ambassadors, presidents of parliament, and at least one cardinal. During the Revolution, the family properties had been confiscated; he had seen his father and uncle killed in the streets of Lyons, while he and his mother barely escaped a similar fate. Gifted with a versatile mind and lively imagination, he painted creditably, wrote light verse and prose with ease, and was accepted as a connoisseur in other fields. Polished and elegant in speech, adept at all intellectual games and amusements, he was an Admirable Crichton of social accomplishments. To these qualities were added the further advantages of a splendid figure and handsome face. Tall, finely proportioned, and of great physical strength, he looked, with his aristocratic features, the perfect courtier of the days of the Grand Monarch, and bore himself with the proud and easy carriage of a true *grand seigneur*. Women raved over him, and many had bestowed on him their ultimate favors. In 1806 he was known to

be heavily in debt; hence his meeting with the Princess at Plombières was a stroke of unexpected good fortune.

Already attracted by his personal charm and unconcealed admiration of her beauty, Pauline was also quick to sense the cultural values M. de Forbin's personality offered her through his innate refinement, distinction of manners, and varied knowledge—another illustration of the quality of divination in many admittedly vain, pleasure-loving women—and resolved to attach him to her service. Apparently, this required little effort or persuasion on her part to bring about, for on October 5 it was officially announced that M. Louis de Forbin had been appointed principal chamberlain to Her Imperial Highness.

Pauline's giddy entourage and erratically governed household soon felt the effects of a new and unmistakably firm directing hand. In the mornings, while the Princess slept, M. de Forbin issued the orders for the day, examined the stores, checked accounts, surveyed the grounds and gardens, inspected the stables, received the notaries and stewards charged with the management of Her Highness's properties and investments, chose the guests for dinner, drew up the menus, and set the days and hours when persons desiring appointments with the Princess might see her. All the affairs of the house, large and small, were controlled and directed by the masterful chamberlain; all its personnel, from the pages to the Princess, responded with

docility to his courteously phrased but none the less strict commands.

Within a very few months, outsiders gazed admiringly at the chamberlain's magnificent new horses and splendid equipage, and professed astonishment that all his debts had been paid. Pauline's circle knew something even more interesting: M. de Forbin had become the accepted lover of the Princess and she gave every evidence of being extremely happy in the new relationship. Refined and discreet, he was an ideal lover for a woman like Pauline, who, with all her weaknesses, did respect the finer things that she had come to realize she lacked and that well-bred gentlewomen possessed. Her love for him made his counsels and disciplines the easier to accept, and she made willing efforts to apply them.

When, fresh from her bath, radiant in an exquisite morning gown, her eyes alight with happy anticipation of another day with her lover, Pauline appeared at noon, she would take M. de Forbin's arm for a stroll through the gardens before joining her ladies- and gentlemen-in-waiting at luncheon. Afterwards, the Princess and her chamberlain withdrew to one of the smaller salons where she listened while he read aloud or answered her naïve questions and comments out of the fullness of his knowledge of life and books.

One day he quoted a recent saying of Madame de Staël's. Pauline interrupted:

"I hate that woman, Louis. She talks so loud and so much. And Napoleon hates her too. Do you like her?"

"No, no, my Princess. I detest her, and it is true, talking is for her the supreme happiness. But she has a brain, she has ideas; one must concede that. Her new book, *Delphine*, is one you must read, or, if you prefer, I will read it to you."

"What is it about?" asked Pauline suspiciously.

"All sorts of things, my love, most of which we need not bother with. But she is, I think, right in one matter. She says our French literature has become sterile, cold, monotonous, and needs new life, warmth, color."

"I should not understand anything of that."

"But you might like the story. It describes a beautiful young girl whose actions are constantly misunderstood by those around her and especially by the man she loves, until at last both go weeping to their graves."

"I should not like that!" exclaimed Pauline. "I hate unhappiness. And why should anyone care what people think if you love and are happy? Tell me some things I can learn and say to M. Chaptal and those clever men from the Academy that Napoleon always has around him."

"Ah! dear Princess," responded M. de Forbin. "You wish to wear borrowed plumage, eh? Well, that is easy. I will teach you some of my friend Le Brun's epigrams. Here is one.

" 'On vient de me voler'—Je plains votre malheur.
'Tous mes vers manuscrits!' Que je plains le voleur!"

"Oh! yes, yes," cried Pauline, laughing. "I like that; I will learn it and say it to Napoleon. Tell me more."

"It is in plays and songs," continued Louis, "that you will find striking lines that you can commit to memory and use when occasion offers. You are always going where Garat sings, and you adore him, lucky man, as all the women in Paris do. How they weep when he sings

'Plaisirs d'amour ne durent qu'un moment,
Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie.'

Surely you know those lines by heart now."

"Oh! But, Louis, they are so sad. And they are not true. Are we not going to love each other all our lives?"

The lesson in literature ended with the lovers in each other's arms.

Later in the afternoon when she drove out to make visits, Pauline took M. de Forbin with her and often introduced him to friends upon whom she called. One day she said:

"You must meet Laura. She is my best friend, but you are not to fall in love with her."

The vivacious Princess led him straight to Laura's bedroom, to the confusion of that bright lady who was still in her nightgown—happily a very becoming one. Laura was immensely impressed by her friend's new chamberlain, so much so that a score of years later

she was lamenting the fact that men so distinguished for talents, manners, and personal appearance as Louis de Forbin no longer existed.

Gradually, under this lover's refining influence, much of the hoyden in Pauline disappeared. Her tone softened; she showed herself more habitually the great lady in both conversation and behavior. He broadened her cultural horizon, equipped her with superior knowledge and points of view, and developed in her those qualities which, as the years passed, made her so attractive to men of recognized distinction and intellectual power.

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§ IV

Season of 1806–7—Illness—Gréoux—Nice

THE Emperor and Empress being absent from Paris the greater part of the winter of 1806-7, Pauline and Caroline assumed the rôles of official hostesses, entertaining on a grand scale throughout the season. Under the skillful direction of the new chamberlain, the machinery of the Hôtel Charost moved with ease and precision amid an atmosphere of elegance and cultivated taste. Lovelier than ever in the happiness of her relation with Forbin, Pauline received with dignity the foreign ambassadors and Imperial functionaries, presided at elaborate dinners of sixty covers where her famous dinner service of silver-gilt was used, and met with smiling grace the crowds that pressed into her drawing room. A special fête in honor of Josephine was organized at Malmaison on March 19, 1807, by her two Imperial sisters-in-law, not because they loved her, but because it furnished an opportunity for them to play leading parts in amateur theatricals. Two light dramatic pieces were especially composed for the occasion, one by the witty M. de Longchamps, the other by Alissan de Chazet. Besides the two Princesses, the

actresses were the Maréchale Ney, Madame de la Valette, and Madame Junot; Messieurs de Brigode, d'Angosse, de Montbreton, and Junot took the male parts. Up to the last moment no one knew whether Pauline's health would permit her to go through with the performance; she was carried to the rehearsals and read from an armchair her part of a young affianced bride. When the time came, however, she was on her feet, danced, and acted her part very creditably, although her singing was considerably out of tune. Her costume of a peasant bride was most becoming, and the natural timidity she showed at this first appearance on a stage really heightened her attractiveness. All agreed that Pauline was a better actress than Caroline, to the delight of those irritated by the latter's insufferable pretensions to excellence.

As the spring advanced, the ill-health of the Princess caused her family keen anxiety; quite obviously she was in a very serious condition. She herself desired to go as soon as possible to a watering place in the South and tentatively suggested Aix-les-Bains. Private reasons also dictated an early departure from Paris. On one or two occasions Forbin had been indiscreetly ardent in the presence of others; rumors of their intimacy were spreading beyond her immediate circle. Pauline was fearful lest they reach the ears of Napoleon whose permission for her to leave the capital must be obtained. Although far away battling on the Vistula, one never knew what reports Fouché and the secret police might

be sending him. Napoleon, when applied to, was reluctant to give his consent. To the Arch-Chancellor Cambacérès, charged with the supervision of the Imperial family during the Emperor's absence, Napoleon wrote: "The doctors advise their patients to go to these watering-places simply to get rid of them. I think it much better for her to regain her health at home instead of rushing about the country in search of it." Nevertheless, he ended by giving his approval after further representations by the Arch-Chancellor, who without doubt was cognizant of the report of an examination of the Princess made by Hallé, one of the Emperor's own physicians, who had been called in consultation by Pauline's medical adviser, Dr. Peyre. The text of this report is a biographical document of high significance. Its facts and implications explain much that would otherwise be obscure or inexplicable in Pauline's life. It was first printed in 1893 in M. Arthur Lévy's interesting volume, *Napoléon Intime*, but it is not given in the English translation of that work which appeared the next year, although the contents entry calls for it. The following version is slightly but not essentially abridged:

"My Dear Colleague; I have thought over very carefully the condition of Her Highness, and the state we found her in yesterday—a state of absolute hysteria. The spasms in her arms were due to hysteria; and so were the pains in her head. Her general appearance indicates acute depression and exhaustion. The womb

was still sensitive, but somewhat less so; and the ligaments still exhibited signs of the painful inflammation for which we prescribed baths last Thursday. The present condition of the uterus is caused by a constant and habitual excitation of that organ; if this does not cease, an exceedingly dangerous situation may result. There is the source of her trouble, and I hinted at its causes when speaking to the Princess. I made reference to the internal douches, and spoke in a general way of the possible causes of such an irritation. I thought I made my meaning clear, but I am afraid I may not have done so sufficiently. I can diagnose in the customary way, and what I said concerning the nature of the symptoms you and I saw, and which you have seen far oftener than I, is more than sufficient to give the key to the riddle. The douche and its tube cannot always be held responsible; one is bound to assume a continuous cause for such exhaustion in the case of a young and beautiful woman in her state of life. Whatever this may be, it is high time to remove it. I have seen many a woman fall a victim to similar weaknesses; all began the same way. It is clear that unless she hastens, it will be too late; we must save this young and interesting woman from ruin. If she has any accomplice, such a person would not admit it, and we might be accused of having discovered nothing or of permitting her to continue. I have no desire to be considered a fool or to be charged with a cowardly complaisance; but, above all this, is the necessity of saving this unhappy lady whose state affects me deeply,

and I by no means despair of its being done. Hasten then, my dear colleague, for there is no time to lose. Make whatever use you care to of this letter, or put me in a position to speak openly and speedily. If we may not speak as experts, we must withdraw from the case entirely. . . . Hallé."

Monday evening, April 20, 1807.

As soon as she learned the Emperor had given his consent, Pauline set out for Aix, after promising her mother to spend a few days at Lyons with Cardinal Fesch. "Her constant suffering rends my heart," wrote Madame Mère to her half brother, "and I am very anxious about her in other ways." She suspected motives other than the expressed ones in her daughter's eagerness to get away, and charged M. de Montbreton, the only person near Pauline whom she trusted, to send her full reports of everything that went on in the household. The Cardinal gave his difficult niece some moral lectures, to which she responded that her health was her first consideration, that the mineral baths and waters were the only things that would do her any good, and that she felt sure she would be all well again if she could spend an entire winter in the South. Still suspicious of her, however, he detached from his staff his old friend, Monseigneur Isoard, and sent him along with Pauline to Aix. The Emperor, too, appears to have learned something that made him regret his yielding, for on May 16 he wrote to Cambacérès: "I have your letter of 7th May. I am sorry you did not

tell me there was a disagreement as to the good to be done by Princess Pauline's journey to Provence. You know I opposed it in the first instance, and was averse to it; but I was written to the effect that the whole Faculty [of Medicine] desired it, and I consented. If I had received your letter sooner, I should certainly not have authorized it." But before this reached Paris, his sister was at Aix. From there artless and disarming letters were sent off to her mother, to the Cardinal, whom she thanked for the good Monseigneur Isoard; and one to Jérôme, which she knew would be passed on to Napoleon, promising an early report on the state of her health and the effects of the waters. This done, Pauline proceeded to carry out her own plans. She persuaded M. de Montbreton and Madame de Bréhan that the baths of Aix were best for them, but for her maladies a curative resort farther South was necessary. Taking only Mlle. Millo, her favorite reader, and a few trustworthy domestics, the Princess slipped away to Gréoux, a secluded little spot in the Lower Alps, difficult of access over almost impassable roads. There, as patiently as she could, she awaited the coming of Louis de Forbin.

"No letters from you this morning, my dear," she wrote to him on June 10. "I am anxious to get one because in your last you said you had a fever. By this time I hope my love is quite well again. This morning I took the baths, and drank four glasses of the water which acted very favorably. On leaving the bath I felt

rather weak, but I am sure my health is much better. You wrote to M. —— that you would soon come to Aix; that you had been ill, but under Madame Derville's tender care and nursing had greatly improved. Happy Madame Derville! You see you are able to confess freely her affection for you, and I envy her. But I, who love you, who have given you so many proofs of my love, who can only be happy when with you, I have to keep silence and hide my feelings. . . . You must return love for love, and believe that everything I do is for our good and the welfare of our love. I have thought over everything and am more sure than ever that all those around us are convinced that all is over between us—so we may be easy in mind about that. It was the doctor who revealed everything to M. Ho——, not with any bad intention, but through fear and stupidity. My mother and uncle know everything; you have no idea what I suffered at Lyons, the tears I shed at finding ourselves discovered. Madame de B—— also took occasion to protest against the manner in which you conducted yourself before her, and said we showed lack of respect for her by acting as we did in Paris. . . . To keep our secret from the world requires the utmost care; even sacrifices and privations are necessary if you wish not to lose me. You must submit to this and believe that I suffer more than you do from the restraints imposed upon us. But we must at any cost avoid misfortune and perhaps utter ruin. Goodbye; I am going to rest a little while, for I have never

written such a long letter before, but you know I would do the impossible for you, for you alone."

At half past nine in the evening she resumes: "The weather was so lovely I went for a walk and watched the workmen building a carriage road. But I was not happy, for neither this nor any other distraction can replace you in my memory for an instant. Madame . . . has a fever, so I am alone with the doctor and Isoard who has settled down here at my uncle's request. He is a kindly soul but stupid like all the rest of them. I have arranged for you to come to my bathing establishment and stay all the time I am there. You need have no fears; only the doctor and M. Isoard will be there, and I have settled it that my beloved may come too. I am only afraid lest the heat may be uncomfortable for you. No matter who else may be present I shall see only you. How this solitude will please me when you are here! May it last a long time, and may we never, never be separated! If we are careful, we can always be happy. Bring your painting things with you, so you can do some pretty sketches for me. My cottage is nearly ready. I am going to have flowers all around it and do everything possible to make it pleasing to my dear love. But now I must stop for I am tired by so much writing. The waters, too, weaken me a little bit. Tomorrow I will write just what you are to do when you arrive, and the way you are to conduct yourself while here. I am going to try and sleep, but I shall dream constantly of you."

The letter ends in a stream of endearing expressions and monosyllables in Italian, just as did those to Fréron in the far-off days of her girlhood.

Forbin arrived. There ensued a summer idyl exquisite in mood and setting, as Pauline and her lover dreamed away long hours of happy and sensuous content in her flower-bordered cottage in the little sun-bathed Provençal spa. The villagers felt honored by the presence of the Emperor's sister amongst them, and an ancient tree, under which she sometimes sat, or reclined luxuriously on the cushions M. de Forbin so deftly arranged for her, is to this day called the Princess's Oak. With the end of the summer came the end of the romance. Pauline went to Nice for the winter, but her chamberlain was not with her. When the Bourbons were restored to the throne of France after the fall of Napoleon, M. de Forbin became Director of the Louvre; in none of its marbles or canvases did he find beauty comparable to that of the living woman who for a brief moment had loved him as she had loved only once before in her multicolored love-life.

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§ V

Pauline at Nice—Winter of 1807–8—Visit to Antibes—Blangini

INSTALLED with her attendants in a charming villa at Nice whose gardens, planted with orange and citron trees, extended down to the sea, the Princess filled her days with characteristic activities and diversions. The rigorous etiquette observed in the Imperial palaces at Saint-Cloud, Fontainebleau, and Paris was discarded for a simpler manner of life. Absence from the excitement and high tension of the capital conserved Pauline's strength; the milder amusements indulged in made no excessive drain upon it, and still provided outlets for her effervescent spirits. Dr. Peyre was close at hand to use what influence he could in guarding and maintaining her health.

The Princess usually breakfasted alone in her chamber, and at eleven o'clock the little court assembled for a light repast. Following that, Pauline, who never herself forgot (publicly), and never allowed others ever to forget, that she was a sister of the Emperor, received in the drawing room the local authorities, notables of the city, and visitors who desired to be presented to her.

On fine afternoons there were drives through the picturesque environs of Nice, and up along La Grande Corniche, the splendid military road just built by Napoleon for his marching columns the better to sweep down into Italy when need required—one of the most beautiful roads scenically in all Europe, familiar to all travelers. "From its eyrie it looks down upon a scene of amazing enchantment, upon the foundations of the everlasting hills, upon a sea glistening like opal, upon a coast with every fantastic variation of crag and cliff, of rounded bay and sparkling beach, of wooded glen and fern-decked murmuring chine. Here are bright villas by the water's edge, a white road that wanders as aimlessly along as a dreaming child, a town or two, and a broad harbor, lined with trees. Far away are daring capes, two little islands, and a line of hills so faint as to be almost unreal."

For some unknown reason, Pauline suddenly developed an enthusiasm for music and singing, and recalled that at Paris she had a Director of Music drawing a salary of 750 francs a month. This personage was Felice Blangini, an Italian composer and fashionable teacher of music. Pauline had taken singing lessons from him and then attached him to her official household. He composed the music for the song whose words she is supposed to have written, beginning "Il faut partir; le ménestrel vient de l'apprendre." Blangini says she handed him the manuscript one day with instructions to set it to music by the next morning, and it became, he

asserts, one of the most popular of all his compositions. Josephine endeavored to entice him away from Pauline, who, when she heard of it, told Blangini he must choose between them. The composer assured the Princess his choice was already made; that he could imagine no greater happiness than to devote his life to her service.

The Director of Music received orders to repair at once to Nice. Arriving late at night, drenched to the skin from an all day's drive in the rain, he was assigned to a comfortable room on the ground floor overlooking the gardens. Its only disadvantage was the thinness of the partitions between it and the rooms of the ladies-in-waiting; Blangini could neither cough nor snore without being overheard, nor could the ladies. For days and days, the company had an orgy of Blangini and all his works—it was Blangini in the morning, Blangini in the afternoon, Blangini before and after dinner, and Blangini until bedtime. He and the Princess played duets together incessantly, sang all the songs and ballads he had ever composed, and new ones written under the inspiration of this intoxicating propinquity. Cardinal Spina, the grand almoner of the Princess, came one day to present his respects before leaving for Genoa. He was told that Her Highness could not see him just then as she was playing a duet with her Director of Music: the Prince of the Church had to return some hours later to say farewell to the Princess. By the Emperor's order, Mass was celebrated every Sunday by one of the almoners. For this service an improvised altar was

erected in the drawing room of the villa; the altar cloths were rich hangings and covers taken down from Pauline's bed. After listening to sacred music, the Princess went off to play profane melodies with Blangini. Before long, it was clearly evident that he had become the successor of M. de Forbin, and that music had supplanted painting among Pauline's mobile enthusiasms. The practitioners of these arts have ever been perilous companions for susceptible women.

Among Pauline's servants with her at Nice was an extraordinary creature, whose antics and peculiarities were a source of perpetual amusement to her friends, and sometimes of embarrassment even to her. This was a humpbacked, bandy-legged negro dwarf, whom Blangini likens to Quasimodo in Victor Hugo's *Nôtre Dame de Paris*. Once a king among his own people on the Congo, fate led him to fall into the hands of slavers and tore him from his native jungle. Jérôme Bonaparte brought him from Africa and presented him to Pauline, who took a great fancy to the little black imp and named him Don Juan. Scarcely three feet in height, he had a head enormously disproportionate to his body, an abdomen that was a vast protruding rotundity, and legs resembling twisted columns. Each of his lips was at least an inch thick, his mouth filled a third of the huge face; and two little holes, half-hidden in the skin, indicated the place where a nose is usually found. The Princess had charged him with the superintendence of her private ablutions, and of all

that preceded and followed them. These tasks he performed with seriousness and gravity, but without the faintest idea of veiling or concealing them. Into the drawing room he would walk solemnly carrying the vessels and utensils denoting his office. When scolded by the Princess for his indiscretion, he would stand stock-still, peering at the company with his little blood-shot eyes, and when the laughter which could not be long suppressed burst forth, Don Juan proudly took it as applause for himself—a deduction for which he may well be excused since he had once been a king. This ex-king of the Congo had one passion that drove Blangini frantic: he played the guitar and played it hideously. Every leisure moment was devoted to it. By day and night he could be heard monotonously thrumming the strings of his belovèd instrument. Blangini, his sensitive ears and musical soul outraged by this barbarous melomania, implored the Princess to forbid the "monster of monsters" the use of the accursed toy. Pauline compromised by instructing Don Juan to confine his guitar playing to certain hours of the day.

Reading and conversation sometimes, though not often, interrupted the flow of songs and duets. Pauline shone best when narrating anecdotes, frequently scandalous and pungent, of the great personages at the Imperial court, not even sparing her own family, concerning whom she let slip some dangerous secrets. Frivolousness, quite as much as a spirit of mischief, led

her to tell all she knew, and occasionally more than she knew.

Though the rushing life of Paris had been left behind her, its fashions, styles, and ever-changing novelties had not. Pauline arranged a special courier service from Nice, and every few days boxes arrived from Paris with new designs and dress goods, exquisite gowns, hats of every variety, and the jewelry, trinkets, and bibelots so dear to the heart and so necessary to the pleasure of this spoiled child of the Empire. At St. Helena, Napoleon said if he had known the extent of his sister's extravagance he would have stopped it. "But that is what happens when one is Emperor and never told about such things." This professed ignorance of Pauline's spendthrift ways and other disturbing actions may fairly be doubted. It is much more probable that, like men far lower in rank than emperors, Napoleon knew a great deal about them, but was helpless against feminine persistence in forbidden courses.

During this stay at Nice, Her Imperial Highness made the famous visit to the house at Antibes where, as gay young Paulette Bonaparte, she had passed the happy summer of 1794. The Princess, with Blangini and her ladies, set out from the city in a roomy boat with a sheltered pavilion erected in its midst for Pauline. Garlands of flowers, flags of every color bedecked the uprights, and two rows of hardy oarsmen dressed in picturesque costumes sped it over the water. Blangini

makes the inevitable comparison with Cleopatra advancing in her galley before Mark Antony. The Princess did not travel incognito; the commandant at Antibes had been duly forewarned of her coming. As the gaily colored boat approached the shore, people thronged down to meet it, and a salute of twenty-one guns was fired in honor of the Imperial visitor. The commandant conducted her to his official residence which had been prepared in a manner befitting the fame and rank of the Emperor's sister. All sat down to a sumptuous banquet; a public reception and ball followed. Next morning the party sought out the objective of this lively excursion—"pilgrimage" Blangini calls it in his naïve *Souvenirs*. The Princess became Paulette again; her joy at thus revisiting the scenes of her girlhood was unbounded. She ran around the house and all over it, searching out every nook and corner of which she had memories. Little cries of happiness escaped her as she came upon them.

"This was my mother's room, and here is the little one close by where I used to sleep; my sisters were on the other side of the hall. And here is the room Napoleon had when he used to come out for a surprise visit and stay with us for a day or two. How he loved us!"

They accepted for another night the overflowing hospitality of the gallant commandant, and in the morning the rowers in masquerade costume bore them back

to Nice. Pauline had thoroughly enjoyed herself. It had all been like a scene from a play and she had been the leading figure on the stage. A fine and natural impulse had been gratified in a way that appealed to her curious blend of naïveté and sophistication.

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§ VI

Borghese Appointed Governor-General of the Transalpine Provinces—Journey to Turin

ON NOVEMBER 15, Napoleon left Fontainebleau for a political tour of Italy. While crossing Mont Cenis he was caught in a blinding snowstorm and narrowly escaped death by fortunately finding shelter in a cave which he described as a "palace of diamonds." Pauline thought it would make an agreeable break in the routine of life at Nice to visit the Emperor at Turin. He vetoed the suggestion instantly. "How can you think of coming to Turin by the roads you would have to travel over?" he wrote on December 20. "Stay all this season at Nice, and get well, so as to be able to come to Paris in the spring." The next news she had from him was a bolt from the blue.

One of the results of his Italian tour was a decision to put more animation into the city of Turin, capital of the Kingdom of Sardinia, and restore something of its former brilliant court and social life. On his recommendation the French Senate, on February 2, 1808, united the Transalpine Provinces into a special Department under a Governor-General ranking as a Grand

Dignitary of the Empire. For this high post Napoleon nominated Prince Borghese. In a message to the Senate, February 14, he said: "We have judged it fitting to name Our brother-in-law for the Governor-Generalship created by the *senatus consultum* of the 2d inst. Our peoples of the Provinces beyond the Alps will recognize in this office and the choice We have made to fill it Our desire to be more closely informed of all that concerns them and Our unceasing thought of even the most distant parts of Our Empire." When Borghese was handed the illuminated parchment containing the new appointment, the Emperor directed him to stop at Nice on his way to Italy and take Pauline with him to Turin. Napoleon had decided to end the scandal of the continued separation of the Prince and Princess, and compel them to live under the same roof for at least a few months of the year. In minutest detail, the Emperor drew up the regulations concerning their manner of living and the size and character of their household establishments, fixed the budget and named the sums alloted to each item. They were to reside together in the Royal Palace in Turin, and enjoy the use of all the other palaces belonging to the King of Sardinia. A pack of hunting hounds would be maintained for them, at the expense of the Crown, at Stupinigi, a royal château six miles southwest of Turin. There would be a governor of the palace, exercising the functions of grand marshal, with a prefect of the palace under his orders. For the Prince, there were to be six chamberlains, four equer-

ries, four aides-de-camp, and a secretary; for the Princess, a lady of honor, twelve ladies-in-waiting, six chamberlains, four equerries; for both, a chapel and twelve pages. Every Sunday the Prince and Princess were to hold, in the name of the Emperor, a formal reception in the State Apartment; once each week the Princess was to receive in her private apartments. The chairs, the swinging doors, the sixty horses in the stables, the dinners, suppers, parades, and public entertainments, all were scrupulously regulated by this master of detail. The income of the Princess was set at 780,000 francs, but no mention made of the three millions still due from the cession of Guastalla. The control of the purse was put in the hands of Borghese, thus making him master of everything, including his wife. When Napoleon struck, he struck hard.

For Pauline, this was a crisis of the first magnitude. From those strange dormant resources of her spirit and intellect, she summoned the resolution always at her command if the occasion were sufficiently important to her, and faced the situation with that steel-like determination she possessed in common with Napoleon. A battle of wills was on. Careful strategy, skillful tactics would be necessary. Pauline recognized her brother's mood, and understood him too well to resist his decisions or refuse to obey his commands. For the moment, she stooped—with the fixed will to conquer in the end. One advantage she had to start with: the Emperor's

mind was occupied with a thousand things, she had but this one. The shadow of Wellington was looming up over Spain, and the "Spanish ulcer," which Napoleon said ruined him, had sprung into malignant activity. Pauline's problem was infinitely simpler, and she had all the means of solving it within herself. During the next few months she made life a nightmare and torment for everyone around her.

Borghese arrived at Nice, April 13. Pauline, of course, was not ready to start. She rented a house for the Prince and his suite on the plea that there were not adequate sleeping apartments for them in her villa. She flirted openly with some of the handsome young gentlemen accompanying the Prince. One of them, who now saw her for the first time, put his impressions on paper. "Her beauty surpassed all that I had imagined from hearing of it; it was really perfection. The ideal, the exquisite, and an indefinable witchery were combined in her in a way impossible to describe. She was feminine, utterly feminine, and that, in my opinion, is the greatest praise one can bestow upon a woman. Life pulsed vividly underneath her languor, energy under the outward aspect of physical frailness. Her glance had an intelligence, a penetrating quality that gave her countenance a certain resemblance to that of the Emperor."

Having tried every conceivable device to cause delay, Pauline at length signified her readiness to go. The departure on April 19 was sensational, exciting the

amazement of all who witnessed it. Seven or eight heavy traveling carriages had been provided for the party. Under the leathern tops of the *impériales* the personal luggage was packed, including 4,000,000 francs' worth of jewelry belonging to the Prince. The mountainous load of other boxes, chests, cases, packages, and bundles suggested the equipment of an exploring expedition to a distant part of the world. The calls and countercalls of the bewildered servants rushing hither and thither in vain endeavors to carry out contradictory orders, the cracking of the drivers' whips, the plunging and neighing of the frightened horses, created an uproar and confusion fit to rasp the strongest nerves. Pauline looked on, amused, and calm as one who

"Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm."

A sedan chair was taken along so that she might be carried when steep hills compelled the other travelers to go on foot to relieve the strain on the horses. On account of the state of her health the journey to Turin was to be by easy stages, the party stopping at inns overnight.

Borghese treated his wife with the greatest respect, and exhibited a superhuman patience with her maddening vacillations, contradictions, and impossible requests. Following his example, everyone else did their utmost to please her. Useless effort. Pauline seemed animated by a single purpose—to tire and exasperate to the breaking point every soul around her, Prince, entourage,

servants. After riding for a brief time in her luxurious, cushion-filled carriage, she would order the sedan chair to be brought and transfer herself to that. Quickly bored by the sedan, nothing but walking would content her; then, suddenly remembering that she was supposed to be an invalid, she would simulate falling from sheer exhaustion, and the long cavalcade had to halt until she was settled again among the pillows in her carriage. To the Prince, she insisted that she must take precedence of him on state and formal occasions. In a recent Senate decree she had seen that he had been given a place immediately following the French Princes. From this, argued Pauline, she, as a French Princess, had the right to precede him, and also be the one to respond to official addresses of welcome, etc. Borghese tried to explain that this latter duty fell to him as Governor-General, not as Prince, and that she was not Governor-General. Pauline refused to yield the point, and retorted that he was Governor-General only because he had married the Emperor's sister—which was doubtless true enough, but rather a cruel thing to say under the circumstances.

Tenda was the second day's destination. They reached it at four in the afternoon with appetites on edge after a day of bitter cold and biting winds. At five o'clock, just as the company were about to sit down at table, an extraordinary tumult broke out in the hostelry. Servants rushed in, then out again. From one of the upper chambers cries of anger mingled with groans of

pain were heard. The innkeeper, a bearded mountaineer resembling a caveman in appearance, stood utterly dumbfounded, staring with amazed eyes at his unusual guests. What was happening? They soon knew. The Princess Pauline had, or said she had, a colic. Her ladies-in-waiting and the Prince offered aid and suggestions. She angrily accused Borghese of being responsible for her colic—about as inconsequential a charge as a human brain could conceive—and demanded a calf's crow enema to alleviate her pains. There was not a calf in the village, as she probably knew from its poverty-stricken appearance. Gently, patiently, Borghese suggested other remedies, equally efficacious, some of which they had at hand, linseed oil or oil of sweet almonds. Pauline rejected all. A calf's crow enema she must have; nothing else would do; they must secure the means for it—she cared not how. Servants and equerries were despatched to ransack the countryside. After agreeing to pay several times its market value, a calf was finally procured at a farmstead, brought to the village and slaughtered. Pauline got what she wanted, and, as there is nothing equal to faith in such matters, declared her colic cured. At eight o'clock in the evening the weary and famished retainers at last sat down to dinner.

As they approached the territory over which the new Governor-General was to rule, Pauline persisted in her demand to be the one to respond officially to the authorities who were preparing to welcome them.

Borghese firmly refused to permit it and Pauline's own chamberlain, M. de Clermont-Tonnerre, supported him. Not until they threatened to report the facts to the Emperor did she desist, for she was fully aware he would not tolerate her interference in public affairs. Napoleon was the only person on earth Pauline really feared, and the Prince knew it. So, in the end, it was he who replied to the flowery addresses of mayors and bishops, and his little speeches were so charming in style and content they raised him high in the esteem of the hearers. Naturally, the latter were unaware that the Prince's gifted secretary, M. Maxime de Villemarest, was the author of these admirable discourses. On April 22 the Prince and Princess entered Turin, a guard of honor around their carriage, and were saluted by the cheers of the populace, the firing of cannon from the citadel, and the ringing of all the church bells. A stream of elaborate entertainments, receptions, banquets, and gala performances at the Opera engulfed them.

* * *

§ VII

Pauline in Turin—Feigned Illness—Return to Paris, July, 1808

INFLEXIBLY determined not to live with Borghese or to remain in Turin, the Princess made little effort to adjust herself to the new environment or ingratiate herself with court or people. Her apartments in the Chablais Palace had been furnished and prepared with every regard for her comfort; she expressed only dislike and disapproval of them. She viewed the presentations, entertainments, triumphal arches, and bearers of addresses of welcome with hauteur and disdain. From Paris, she had ordered a gorgeous new trousseau wherewith to dazzle the Turinese. Léger had designed a magnificent riding habit of cashmere, amaranth in color and gold-embroidered; from Léroy had come seven new and beautiful court costumes; and in addition to these were striking dresses of silver-embroidered percale, cut Cossack style, for walking. But ill-humor and discontent deprived her of much of the anticipated pleasure of wearing and displaying these lovely creations of the great Parisian artists. One little scene alone emerges showing her in a gracious

mood, and this was brought about by the soft-tongued diplomacy of that experienced courtier, M. de Villemarest.

As secretary to the Prince it was incumbent upon him to create favorable impressions of the Governor-General and the Princess in the minds of their new subjects. While riding horseback early in the morning of the day on which the city of Turin was to give its grand ball in honor of the Borgheses, an idea occurred to him which he thought would appeal to the "Bonapartist" spirit of Pauline. He hastened to lay it before her and was pleasantly received. "Your Highness is well aware," he said, "of the great influence small things sometimes have. We have only been here eight days but already I have observed how intensely loyal the Piedmontese are to their national customs and traditions. Tonight, Your Highness will naturally give the signal for the ball to begin. Let it open with a Montferrine. This may seem childish, perhaps, but I am confident everyone present will be delighted at your suggesting it. To produce the right effect, Canavassi (the leader of the orchestra) will be instructed to begin by playing the opening bars of a French quadrille, upon which you will immediately call for silence and say you desire a Montferrine." This Montferrine—Manfrina is the modern spelling—was a rustic dance of the hurdy-gurdy type, common to both Italy and Southern France. Pauline liked the suggestion and promised to carry it out. All went as planned. The Princess played

her part to perfection, and when she signified her wish for the popular peasant dance, the floor and galleries of the Opera rang with cries and shouts of *"Vive l'empereur! Vive le prince! Vive la princesse!"* Napoleon *would* have appreciated this bit of cleverly staged drama.

Pauline refused to remain in Turin, whose climate she declared was ruinous to her health, so the Governor-General's court moved out to Stupinigi and settled in that palatial hunting lodge of the Kings of Sardinia. Within three weeks after leaving Nice, the Princess was bombarding Napoleon with letters imploring his permission to go to a health resort, preferably Aix-les-Bains. By every method known to her, and they were many, she feigned desperate and increasing illness. In general, she was seldom wholly free from the genuine marks of the constitutional hysteria and tendency to scrofula that afflicted her. Now, simulating convulsions and syncopes with marvelous realism, plying herself with drugs and strong medicines, Pauline soon induced conditions wholly deceptive to the Turin physicians. Unacquainted with her ways and wiles, they pronounced her dangerously ill. Caught in the web she cast over them, they went even further and prescribed Aix-les-Bains as the best place for a cure. Her own physician, Dr. Peyre, was not there to withstand this witchcraft. At Nice, he had severely reprimanded the Princess for disobeying his instructions, whereupon, according to Blangini, "she packed him off" to Paris in disgrace.

He was a good physician but a poor courtier. The Prince, despite the advice of the medical men, refused to allow his wife to leave without the express permission of the Emperor. Pauline raged.

"I am a French citizen! No one has a right to keep me from my country. Is it because I am Princess Borghese? A fine reason, indeed! I don't want this title. I am the widow of General Leclerc and quite satisfied with that. I have an income of twenty thousand francs of my own, and it is sufficient for me. I have no need of more, for my tastes are modest and simple. Let me go! I will not be tyrannized over like this. You could not act differently if you wanted to kill me, or find a surer way of doing so. Yes, that's what you want, you want to get rid of me. If I am kept here, I shall be in my grave within three months. That's what will happen, between this damnable Turin climate and beastly palace that sweats boredom from every stick and stone in it. I *am* ill, very ill, more so than anyone realizes."

None of those who knew her best believed it; but they kept silence and admired the splendid acting. It was Villemarest's duty to forward regularly to the Emperor an official report of all that was occurring, politically or otherwise, in the Department of the Transalpine Provinces. Pauline besought him to add personal messages of her own, reinforcing the urgent appeals in her letters. The astute secretary wrote exactly as the Princess dictated, and carefully dissociated himself from any responsibility for the accuracy of her state-

ments. Napoleon's replies were far from soothing. He swallowed nicely the bits of bait she had put in the trap set for him, but evaded the essential point—Aix-les-Bains. On May 26, 1808, he wrote from Bayonne: "I have your letter of the 18th of May. I approve of your going to take the waters in the valley of Aosta. I am sorry to learn your health is bad. I suppose you are wise and that it is by no fault of yours? I observe with pleasure that you are pleased with your lady-in-waiting, and with your Piedmontese ladies. Make yourself loved; be affable with everybody; try to be even-tempered and to make the Prince happy."

That reference to the Prince was hot steel on sensitive flesh. The Princess loathed her husband, and flew into a passion if he came near her in private.

Borghese took the duties of his new post very casually. As Governor-General, he asked only to govern as little as possible. He gave personal attention only to official parade and ceremony, the details of receptions, balls, and presentations, the trappings and decorative aspects of his office. So long as his prestige was not affected, so long as the appearance of power was left him, he willingly let others possess the reality. The hours not spent in ceremony, at table, or with his horses, were passed in sleeping, and he slept much. Incapable of a serious intellectual interest or occupation, the Prince read no books and but one journal—*Le Journal des Modes*. To such a woman as Pauline, such a man was a

perpetual thorn in the flesh. She must and would escape him.

Blangini was still with the household, very much against his will. That faint-hearted lover had been terror-struck by the arrival of Borghese at Nice. When the Prince coldly informed him his name was not on the personnel lists drawn up by the Emperor, the musician asked leave to return to Paris immediately. Pauline refused the request, promising to create a new position for him at Turin at double his former salary. All intimacy between them necessarily ceased, and Blangini saw the Princess only when especially summoned to her presence. On one of the last evenings at Nice she impishly commanded him to sing with Mademoiselle Millo the duet, "*Armide, vous m'allez quitter.*" At Turin and Stupinigi, the composer was fed and lodged, but no new appointment came. Pauline was too much engrossed with her illness to have time to concern herself with such a trivial matter. Blangini's life became, he says, "a perfect hell." At last, he determined to go, regardless of his mistress's wishes. She sent for him. He found her in her bath.

"My poor Blangini," she exclaimed, "how changed you are! But I, too, have suffered agonies this past month. Be patient. I am going to the waters at Aix. I have written to the Emperor and also to my mother, telling them that nothing in this world will make me stay longer in Turin. I will get away, if necessary, on foot and disguised. I will not live like this. Go on to

Paris, my dear Blangini, and wait for me there. You will not have to wait long."

At this point a stroke of unexpected good fortune befell her. Napoleon had just wrung the crown of Spain from the pitiful hands into which it had fallen, and decided to place Joseph Bonaparte upon the historic throne once occupied by the masterful Emperor Charles the Fifth, and the Philip who thought to crush England with the famous Spanish Armada. Napoleon's choice of Joseph was dictated by natural affection, by his always lurking clan respect for the eldest brother, and the fact that he had more confidence in him than in his other brothers. He wrote:

"King Charles, by a treaty which I have just concluded with him, has ceded to me all his rights to the crown of Spain. . . . This crown I have destined for you. . . . I desire therefore that, immediately on the receipt of this letter, you will commit the regency [of the Kingdom of Naples] to whomsoever you please, and the command of the troops to Marshal Jourdan, and that you set out for Bayonne by the shortest route possible, Turin, Mont Cenis, and Lyons."

Joseph reached Turin on May 30. Pauline saw her opportunity with the eagle glance of Napoleon detecting a vulnerable spot in an enemy position and seized it with the same swift rush. She poured out her woes to Joseph, exhibiting every sign of acute illness, and called in the doctors to confirm it. Joseph, deeply touched by her apparent sufferings, was completely deceived.

Knowing nothing of the Emperor's private views and intentions regarding Pauline, he fell guilelessly into the snare woven by this beautiful and appealing sister. As head of the family, he waved Borghese's objections aside, accorded Pauline permission to go wherever she deemed best, and reported his action to the Emperor.

"I found Pauline here in a deplorable state. She had eaten nothing for eight days, not being able to retain even the lightest bouillon. Her doctors told me she ought to leave the humid air of Turin as soon as possible and go to the baths of Aix in Savoy. Her husband hesitated because he had not received Your Majesty's sanction for this. But I did not hesitate an instant in telling him to let his wife go immediately, and that I would assume all responsibility for this decision to Your Majesty, who assuredly desires his sister to live."

The good Joseph—unwittingly he had unlocked the cage in which the lovely captive was imprisoned. Within twenty-four hours she was off. Dr. Vastapani, the court physician, accompanied her by order of Borghese. To the Prince, she left Don Juan, lately demoted from the bedchamber and bath to the kitchen, where he looked magnificent in the white garb of a cook.

Joseph's letter crossed one from Napoleon to Pauline dated June 2. It showed she had not duped the brother whose mind was a sharper tool than hers.

"Your present indisposition is only a touch of spring fever. Stupinigi may be rather damp; Turin is pref-

erable. I do not see why you do not go to the baths at Lucca; and there is no objection to your going to those at Saint-Didier; both these places are within the Department; but you must not leave the Department without my permission."

By the time this letter reached Turin, Pauline was at Aix; she arrived there on June 6. It was still necessary, however, to make sure of not being ordered back to Borghese. By every post she despatched letters to her family containing the most alarming reports: she was still very ill, she was growing worse, she believed she was going to die. Dr. Vastapani sent faithful reports to the Prince and in one described her physical state in terms so professional that even Italian and French writers refrain from quoting them. Frightened at what they thought must be a really critical condition, Madame Mère and Cardinal Fesch left Paris on July 1 and traveled posthaste by day and night to reach her. King Louis wrote from Holland to Napoleon's aide-de-camp Lavalette in Paris:

"My mother has gone to Aix to be near my sister; this shows how seriously ill she is. I am here alone and very miserable, and I want to hear good news of my dear sister. I grew up with her, my dear Lavalette, and the memories of our childhood together are very dear to me. When I think of her invalidism, the long years she has suffered from it, and how much unhappiness there has been in her life, I am deeply affected. Do send me any news you may have of her. Inquire

at my mother's and at Uncle Fesch's, where they will surely hear something every day."

Were mother and uncle deceived when they reached the bedside of the suffering Princess? It may well be doubted, for there is not the least alarm or anxiety expressed in the note Madame Mère sent Lucien on July 6: "Paulette, with whom the climate of Turin did not agree, is somewhat more ill than usual." On July 12, when her mother went to Lyons by the land route, Pauline embarked on Lake Bourget and made the trip by way of the Rhône. After a brief rest at her uncle's episcopal residence, she went on to Paris. Élisa wrote to Lucien: "Paulette has made fools of us all. I said that she would trick the Emperor, for her illness is nothing more than the desire to be in Paris."

The Princess arrived at the capital, not in a half-dying condition, but filled with fury towards Borghese from whom she had received no money. "The conduct of the Prince has been unspeakable. He saw, he knew the climate of Turin was killing me, and that I should succumb to it if I remained there any longer. To insist on keeping me there was nothing less than a crime. And, thanks to his generosity, I am here without a sou." With some difficulty, she borrowed 40,000 francs from the banker Lafitte, who had sworn never to lend money to the Princesses of the Imperial family. This would suffice until the return of the Emperor; he would not leave his sister in beggary.

Napoleon arrived August 15. How would he receive

her, this imperious brother who had created, largely with her in mind, the Transalpine Department, made her residence there compulsory, ordered Borghese to be severe and even refuse her money, who had strictly forbidden her journey to Aix—a command she had disobeyed flagrantly? She came away smiling from the first interview with him. "The Emperor was charming to me. I am to stay in France, and he is going to arrange about my financial affairs and estate when he returns from Germany." On August 22, Napoleon dashes off a little note at Saint-Cloud: "And how are you feeling, lovely Princess? Are you very tired? What are you doing today?"

Pauline had won.

* * *

§ VIII

Pauline's Finances—Summer of 1809 at Aix-la-Chapelle—Court at Fontainebleau—Divorce of Josephine

NAPOLEON amply fulfilled his promise to regulate the financial affairs of the Princess, and they needed regulation. She was incorrigible in her extravagance upon herself; towards others she frequently evinced a peasant-like strain of miserliness; some of her domestic economies were childishly absurd, others meanly small. Her secretaries and men of business never knew what expenditures were being made without their knowledge, and, in spite of generous allowances and large gifts of money from her brother, and her share of Borghese's income, Pauline's accounts were often in such a state of disorder that even the expert accountants of the Treasury despaired of untangling them. Shortly after the Emperor's return from Erfurth, the grand marshal announced that, dating from January 1, 1809, the Princess would enjoy a provisional income of 600,000 francs, independent of what she received from the Prince, and be given the château and estate at Neuilly which the Murats had ceded back to

Napoleon upon their elevation to the throne of Naples. This announcement quieted her clamorous creditors who were becoming disagreeably pressing. But six hundred thousand francs were far from sufficient to support this elegant lady's style of living and social responsibilities. She must have more, much more, and it must come, it could only come from the Imperial brother. She made no demands, however, no direct requests, did not act as her brothers and sisters would have in like circumstances. During the hours when the Emperor could throw off his heavy burden of state affairs, it was Pauline with whom he could relax, she who best knew how to stir and share in the playful side of his nature. Her madcap streak was matched by the rough schoolboy strain in him. In private, he could romp with her as with no other, not even Mademoiselle Georges, his best playfellow of all the ladies upon whom he bestowed extra-conjugal attentions. And when he was in a mood for company, Pauline knew just the men and women, the kind of parties, dinners, and games that gave him the most amusement and distraction. This devotion and understanding drew to her all the warmth and tenderness of his affection. When, unobtrusively, she dropped hints of special needs or desires, or casually referred to the difficulty of obtaining something because of its cost, the seed fell in prepared and fruitful soil. On March 1, 1809, Napoleon informed his sister of arrangements he had made whereby her income for that year would be 1,300,000 francs. "I hope you will

see in these dispositions a proof of my affection for you." Nine months later, through gifts and a redistribution of property, he increased her revenues for the year 1810 to over 1,500,000 francs. Pauline's giddy little head swirled with joy. These rows of figures represented sums on which unending drafts might be made. Under their hypnotic influence she consented, without opposition, to obey the Emperor's wish that she should appear in public with Prince Borghese when the Governor-General was in Paris on official business or occasions of ceremony when Napoleon desired all the members of his family to be assembled around him.

In April, 1809, the Emperor took the field in the war with Austria that had again broken out. When news of the victory at Eckmühl reached her, the Princess bought a new dinner service of fifteen covers, and a pretty shallop for use at Neuilly that cost 12,000 francs. Then from Ratisbon came a rumor that Napoleon had been dangerously, perhaps fatally wounded. Terror filled her. "He is so brave, so fearless, I tremble for him always. If he should die, what would become of us? We should all be massacred!" Fate was not yet ready to topple the Corsican clan from the dazzling heights on which its superman had thrust it. Seated on a spot from which he could view the attack on Ratisbon, Napoleon was nervously beating the ground with his whip when a bullet from a Tyrolean musket struck the great toe on one of his feet, inflicting a painful but not severe wound. A wild report that he had been

killed spread rapidly through the ranks of his army, and forced him to ride about among the troops to reassure them. On returning to a small house outside the range of gunfire to have the boot cut away and the wound dressed, the Emperor fainted. After the murderous battle of Wagram he sent a special messenger to Pauline telling her he was safe.

"Did she give you a present?" he asked, when the messenger returned.

"No, Sire."

"I thought she wouldn't, the stingy little beast!" exclaimed His Majesty.

That summer Pauline went with her mother to Aix-la-Chapelle, which shared with Aix in Savoy the honors of a fashionable thermal resort. King Louis of Holland was also there. "The journey," says Beugnot, "left despair in more than one place, and hope in others. She had been followed to Aix, and did not know whether to choose to perceive it; and there she found more than one adorer whose incense was lost in smoke. She treated the matter with charming levity; she might be called Atalanta skimming over the flowers without leaving any trace of her footsteps. At sight of her I said to myself, not without keen regret, 'Happy the mortals who still sojourn in that fair period of life when one is permitted to worship at such a shrine.'" Each of the Bonapartes was surrounded by a little court, but Pauline's included the loveliest ladies and handsomest men. They made the season a merry one with the danc-

ing, high card-playing, flirtation, intrigue, and mad frolics with which such a society in such a place fills its holiday hours. The waters proved extremely beneficial to the Princess, so that with improved health, an abundance of pleasure, and constant masculine adoration she was in blithe and happy mood. Neither the hypochondriac gloom of King Louis nor her mother's daily grumbling at the excessive cost of everything could dampen Pauline's spirits. She delayed departure long after the time originally set for it, to the extreme disgust and irritation of her servants, one of whom wrote: "The gaiety of these ladies comes so near to sheer insanity that I have only one desire, and that is to see the end of this interminable season." It was the Emperor who finally terminated it. Returning from Austria at the end of October, he directed his court to assemble at Fontainebleau for three weeks of formal receptions and balls. He needed incessant diversion; the momentous decision to divorce Josephine had been taken; he had to prepare himself for the wrenching, heartbreaking announcement to the woman once so passionately loved, and for whom he still retained a deep affection.

All those summoned to Fontainebleau received careful instructions regarding the etiquette to be observed and the social duties expected of them. Each evening of the week the court assembled in the apartments of one or another of the great personages present. On one evening the Emperor held a reception, followed by

music and cards. On two evenings plays were given, one being followed by a ball in Caroline's apartment, the other by one in Pauline's. The Princes and Ministers of State gave dinners and invited all the members of the court in turn. The Emperor reserved the right to dine alone with the Empress, and Kings, Princes, or others sat down with them only by special invitation.

Certain days were fixed for hunting, guests being invited to accompany the hunt in carriages or on horseback as they preferred. Rarely has there been seen anything more picturesque and colorful than these Imperial hunting parties in the beautiful forest of Fontainebleau. To the loveliness of the women, the superb physique and soldierly bearing of Napoleon's marshals and aides, were added the vivid hues of the splendid riding habits designed by Léroy. The Emperor and all the gentlemen of the hunt wore green coats laced with gold or silver. Each Princess had adopted an individual color for herself and the ladies of her household. That of the Empress was amaranth velvet, embroidered in gold; of Hortense, blue and silver; of Caroline, pink and silver; of Pauline, lilac and silver. The dress was a kind of tunic worn over a gown of embroidered white satin; a *toque* with white plume and velvet boots matching the dress completed these arresting costumes, whose ensemble and rainbow tints, flashing in the sunlight against the varied green of trees and grass, made a picture no artist could adequately paint or pen fitly de-

scribe. Amid all the gathered loveliness of France, the lady in lilac and silver had no rival as Queen of Beauty.

Nothing proves more conclusively the comfort and trust Napoleon felt in this sister than their close association during those days of strain at Fontainebleau. Daily he sought her companionship, and, one must suppose, confided to her the step he was about to take. On his drives through the forest Pauline alone accompanied him, and nearly every evening found him in her apartments. Hortense, Josephine's daughter, herself says that it was in Pauline's society the Emperor found the chief means of distracting his mind and fortifying himself for the approaching ordeal. Josephine could not mistake the signs of the coming storm: Napoleon's unaccustomed reserve, the shortness of the rare moments he devoted to her, the closing of the doors that communicated between their two apartments. But it was not until after the break-up of the court and the return to Paris that he found the courage verbally to make known his decision to her. That scene, so often described, took place on November 30 in the private drawing room of the Tuileries. On December 15, 1809, a Senatus Consultum declared their marriage null. The next day the family, all in court costume, assembled in the grand salon of the Tuileries where the act of separation was read and the Empress, bravely mastering her feelings, pronounced the oath of acceptance. Among the Bonapartes, Napoleon's was the only countenance that betrayed emotion. Standing immovable as a statue, his

arms crossed upon his breast, he could not conceal the twitchings of his face under the drooping plumes of his hat of ceremony. In the faces of the family one read only satisfaction at the passing of her who had so long held influence, gentle and kindly though it ever was, over their brother. The spirit of the clan and the vendetta had triumphed.

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§ IX

Napoleon's Marriage to Marie Louise—Pauline's Services—Arrival of Borghese—Pauline's Fête at Neuilly—Unfortunate Impression on Public

THE profuse gifts of money Napoleon made his sisters were not intended wholly for their personal maintenance and enjoyment. He expected and exacted a considerable return in the form of social activity of a semi-public nature, and a mode of living that would render his court and Paris society superior to any other in Europe. Incontestably this was true of it during the period when the Napoleonic Empire was at its zenith. The approaching ceremonies in connection with the Emperor's marriage to Marie Louise drew to Paris members of the reigning families and representatives of the nobility of every European country. Crowned heads, Majesties, and Highnesses were everywhere; the corridors of the Tuileries were encumbered with Kings. For both political and social reasons Napoleon desired their reception and entertainment to be on a scale and of a magnificence beyond anything they had hitherto known; and, since he was marrying an Austrian Archduchess, he was particularly anxious to impress the

ancient, aristocratic House of Austria with the correctness and truly regal quality of his own Imperial court. There was a further reason—one related to the internal politics of France—for the feverish succession of splendid fêtes and spectacular balls that opened with the year 1810. Napoleon was aware that the middle and lower classes bitterly resented his divorce of Josephine; they knew only of her goodness and kindness and felt that she had been unjustly treated. The Emperor hoped to divert their minds from this mood by dazzling them with magnificent public spectacles and luxurious private balls, and further placate them through the stimulus to trade given by the huge expenditures of money involved in this Imperial display.

Publicly and privately, Pauline was an efficient aide to her brother at this time. In the first three months of the year she gave ten superb balls and receptions. Besides the wish to gratify Napoleon, her personal ambition was to have her social contribution excel all others in *éclat* and elegance. There is no question but that she achieved her purpose, and her success was due to keen-sightedness and unerring taste in two essential factors in such problems. In the first place, Pauline made her gatherings select, both in number and quality: "the world" was not permitted to crowd into them; and secondly, all the appointments and accessories were the finest of their kind. She invited only women who were young, beautiful, and accomplished, only men handsome, informed, and at ease in princely drawing rooms.

The fashionable orchestra of the day—Julien's—played at her dinners and dances; at the table and buffet only the choicest viands appeared, served on exquisite gold, silver or china plate; the candles in the chandeliers were more numerous than elsewhere, giving the effect of greater, more intense light; the conversation was the most effervescent—and risqué—in all Paris. On four or five evenings in every week the Emperor could be seen in his sister's salon. As for the Princess herself, there was none to compare with her in beauty; her gowns might be imitated but no other woman could wear them with equal grace; her jewels outshone those of the visiting royalties. Her passion for precious stones was insatiable; she could never possess enough of them and pinched every item in her budget to secure additional means to increase her fabulous store. At one jeweler's on the Quai des Orfèvres in the course of a single year Pauline expended over 250,000 francs, some of her acquisitions being: a necklace of thirty-four diamonds of the finest cut and brilliance, 135,000 francs; a set of corals and diamonds, 31,000 francs; amethysts, 30,000 francs; Brazilian rubies, 28,000 francs. One of several famous girdles appeared about this time—the one with the false emeralds surrounded by real diamonds, which cost her 13,000 francs and looked a million in value. The first time she wore this was an event; women raved over it, men hung about in fascinated pose. Pauline laughed quietly to herself.

In private, she performed numberless little services

for her brother. Within her residence in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, Pauline veiled his intrigue with pretty, blonde Madame de Mathis, one of her ladies, between his divorce and second marriage. With Hortense, she endeavored, vainly, to teach him to waltz. When he was preparing to go to Compiègne to meet Marie Louise, she told him his clothes were badly cut and did not fit properly. "You are so obstinate about not wearing braces; your trousers always look as if they were falling off," she said, and advised him to change his tailor. He did so and tried Léger, who tailored Borghese, Prince Eugène, Joseph and Jérôme Bonaparte, Marshal Berthier, and Prince Murat. The latter spent over 100,000 francs a year on uniforms, great-coats, and suits. After three years, Léger gave the Emperor up, finding him too difficult and parsimonious.

On February 26, 1810, Napoleon sent letters to absent members of his family signifying his wish for their presence at his coming meeting and marriage with Marie Louise, and directing them to let nothing prevent their being in Paris by March 20. Prince Borghese, of course, was among those summoned. Pauline at once issued to her household a formal bulletin of minute and precise instructions concerning the changes in the rooms and furniture to be made in preparation for the Prince's temporary stay. "Her Imperial Highness will remove to her apartment on the *rez-de-chaussée*, leaving free the apartment on the first floor for Monsignor the Prince Camille." The bed of embroidered tulle with

white satin *doublé* must be transferred to the blue chamber, and the rose bed to the rose cabinet together with the dressing-table. A sofa, with hand-screen and flower-stands, was also to go in the blue chamber. Equally detailed directions were given for the bathroom and its equipment, the window-shutters, etc., etc. When the Prince arrived, his wife read him the Emperor's letter which fixed her personal income and regulated the separation of her properties from those of Borghese. She then announced that as she had not room to house the retinue he had brought with him, she had engaged —at his expense, of course—the Hôtel Sinet, where his chamberlains, equerries, and domestics would find lodgment. With respect to meals, Borghese must naturally pay the cost of his own dinner and those of his people. She would lend him a carriage and horses until his own arrived. The Prince accepted these conditions with what grace he could summon, but his difficulties were by no means at an end. Pauline's resources as a torment were limitless. When he walked about in his apartment she sent word that such a noise over her head was bad for her nerves. Her doors were closed to him and if he wished to see her he had to give notice beforehand. When the Emperor asked him one morning how the Princess was, Borghese was obliged to confess complete ignorance, as he had not seen her since dinner the day before. She sent back one of his notes addressed to her simply as "the Princess Borghese," informing him that Her Imperial Highness the Princess Pauline would

only receive letters whose envelopes bore the titles and designations belonging to her rank.

She was present at Compiègne when Marie Louise arrived, and one of those who bore the mantle of the new Empress at the marriage ceremony in April. Pauline's attitude towards the young and timid successor of the hated Josephine was gracious and good-natured. She had nothing to fear from this nineteen-year-old girl, inexperienced, lacking in elegance and sophisticated ease, and marked with the hereditary blemish of the protruding Hapsburg lower lip. The marriage rites over, the Princess threw herself with fervor into the preparations for the grand fête and ball she was to give at Neuilly early in June in honor of the Emperor and Empress. Daily she gathered around her poets, architects, scene painters, artists, and experts of every sort to plan out the elaborate program and decide on the infinitude of details involved. The most fertile-minded and ingenious of her assistants was Despréaux, Master of the Ballet at the Opéra. In the end, she achieved a result surpassing in luxuriance anything known even in that period of Babylonian excess.

At nine o'clock in the evening the festivities began with a little comedy, *La Dans Interrompue.* As the curtain fell on this, the Emperor and Empress entered the gardens from whose trees hung hundreds of colored lanterns. Carefully separated from each other by just the right distances, and concealed by flowers and shrubs, the finest orchestras of Paris played enchanting

music. At the foot of the gardens, moored to the banks of the Seine, lay Pauline's beautiful pleasure yacht, decorated with flags and brightly illuminated. For a full half-hour the Imperial pair walked through a veritable fairyland, surprised at every turning in their promenade by a new triumph of the combined arts of decoration, painting, architecture, and theater. White statues, singly and in groups, came suddenly to life in the moonlight and descended gracefully from plinths and pedestals, weaving themselves into the figures of a dance, scattering flowers beneath the feet of Their Majesties, or leading them towards the Temple of Hymen. From thence they passed to other skillfully devised structures of light woodwork and painted canvas, a Temple of Glory, a Home of Caprice, and, most courteous gesture of all, an exact and perfect replica of the Castle of Schönbrunn, the summer home of the Empress during her brief girlhood. Returning to the château, a signal from the Emperor set off a heaven-filling blaze of fireworks, amidst which Signora Saqui performed marvels of delicate balancing on a taut wire strung at a breath-taking height. A supper for six hundred guests of varied kinds and ranks, from common soldiers to the Emperor, followed, five different menus being offered. Their Majesties sat at a table of twelve covers. Fifteen tables of ten covers each were provided for the ladies, and one of twenty for the actors. Two hundred and fifty guests ate standing, at a buffet; and a cold dinner was served to one hundred men of the Foot Guards

and fifty of the Horse. Dancing began at midnight. The exquisite Pauline, her white skin gleaming through the myriad colored fires of its incrustation of diamonds, received with happy smiles the felicitations of her favored guests. At last, a June sun rose to extinguish the artificial lights of this modern Arabian Nights Entertainment.

The Princess's ball was remembered for a generation, and it had some somber after effects, immediate and remote. Ugly murmurs were heard regarding the waste and expense it represented—its known costs were over 100,000 francs. One of the guests, Stanislas Girardin, wrote in his *Journal*: "One could not repress the sad and solemn reflection that there had been expended in a few hours a sum equal to the taxes paid by several provinces for a year. These extravagances of Courts are the tributes exacted by their vanity; they lead inevitably to ruin." When Napoleon, quickly sensitive to public opinion, learned from his secret police of the deplorable impression made by Pauline's aristocratic and luxurious fête, he ordered her to repeat it two days later for the benefit of the *bourgeoisie*. Through the municipal authorities, five thousand invitations were sent out to representatives of the respectable middle and professional classes. But this attempt to soothe the irritation failed, and Pauline, too, for once failed her brother badly. Many of those invited refused to come, saying, "We do not want the court's leavings." To those who came Pauline showed herself cold and dis-

dainful, closed the salons to them and served no supper. They could only walk about the gardens and view the faded decorations. Men left in sullen anger, women in a fury. It seemed like an echo of the days before the Revolution; it stank of the Regency and Bourbon arrogance. For days, in the little shops of the Rue Saint-Denis and elsewhere, Pauline's reputation was torn to shreds and new infamies imputed to her. Napoleon himself did not come off scatheless.

Nothing would have been simpler than to conciliate the vanity of this middle class by a show of courtesy, of outwardly polite attention, by allowing its eager eyes a glimpse of the tables at which the great of the earth sat, the glasses from which they drank, the beds in which they slept. An ingrained vein of servility in the comfortable middle stratum of society makes it the easiest of social classes to be brought to heel by dominant wealth or power. Pauline missed a splendid chance to support her brother's Imperial rule. But it would be unfair to condemn her too harshly. Many and far greater personages have failed to grasp like opportunities. Hereditary, military, and moneyed aristocracies all contribute to their doom by similar errors, and ignorance of human nature.

* * *

§ X

Jules de Canouville

AT FONTAINEBLEAU in September Pauline exerted herself assiduously to please Napoleon by organizing and devising entertainment for the young Empress. The Thursday receptions of the Princess were enlivened each week by some new toy or diversion, at one time a little group of dancing dogs, at another the finest magic lantern in Paris. An effort to secure Olivier, the popular conjurer and juggler, failed because Queen Hortense had already retained him. The dinners of the Princess were as gay and select as ever, and for some weeks the Emperor had no cause to be displeased with her. Such a state of things, obviously, was too good to last. Napoleon had with him his trusted chief of staff, Marshal Berthier, successively Prince of Neufchâtel and Prince of Wagram, and with the Marshal were four of his aides, one of whom, Armand Jules de Canouville, was soon at Pauline's feet, madly in love with her. Pauline returned his passion with sincerity and ardor.

The Prince of Wagram's aides-de-camp were renowned throughout the army under the nickname of

"Berthier's Boobies." These young men maintained in the democratic army of the Revolution and Empire the traditions and chivalrous code of the old *noblesse*. Their ancestors had fought at Fontenoy and long before. They were the "Dandies" of their day, setting the fashions for their sex, wasting fortunes at cards, and inflaming the hearts of women. Scented and corseted, they carried their toilet articles in their cartridge boxes, and wore uniforms colorful enough for a costume ball. They led a charge with the gallantry and poise of huntsmen following the hounds; they faced death as smilingly as though it were their favorite partner in a dance. Line officers envied and cursed them; the soldiers cheered their splendid military bearing and impetuous dash. In general the world forgave their mad joy of life because of the disdain they showed of preserving it. Bravery was so instinctive in them they were unconscious of it. There was never a moment when they were not ready for duty. "Go," was the only order they ever received or needed from Berthier, and they were off, from bivouac or ballroom, to deliver a message across a sanguinary battlefield, take a battery, or ride five hundred leagues with or without rations. Some returned; these were the lucky ones. When the roster of those killed or crippled for life was read, Frenchmen bared their heads. Their names evoked three centuries of the nation's history: Briqueville, Bruyère, Choiseul, Colbert, Girardin, La Grange, Montholon, Noailles, Périgord.

In this group Jules de Canouville was an outstanding

figure, possessing in full measure its virtues and defects, courage and exuberant folly. Of an old Norman family, he enlisted at the age of seventeen as a private in the Sixteenth Dragoons. At twenty-one he had his captaincy, at twenty-three he was on Berthier's staff, and now at twenty-five a colonel. Every step had been earned by his own bravery or effort, for in the military sphere nothing but sheer merit could draw marks of distinction from Napoleon, and Canouville had received several. His chief faults were extreme foppery and stupid indiscretion regarding his relations with women, yet the latter viewed these very defects as additional claims to their indulgence. Women repeatedly forgave him conduct which seriously compromised them, thereby showing themselves as stupid as he. They were foolishly flattered and delighted at his readiness to go any lengths to obey their commands. He could not keep his boudoir triumphs to himself but babbled of them everywhere to anyone who would listen. Only a "booby" could fail to realize the wisdom of keeping his liaison with the Emperor's sister as inconspicuous as possible. But instead, "feeling proud of his success, he urged her to afford him some signal proof of his triumph; the greater readiness she evinced in bestowing favors upon him, the more he demanded of her; the connection at last acquired a deplorable notoriety, occasioned by the indiscreet conduct of both."

At the beginning of November, 1810, Canouville was suddenly ordered to Portugal with important despatches

for Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling. Gossip immediately ascribed his selection for this duty to the Emperor. Everyone at court believed that Napoleon, having learned how fast and how far the relations between Pauline and the handsome dragoon had gone, took this means of separating the infatuated pair. So much confusion, so many contradictory statements surround this episode, it is difficult if not impossible to ascertain the exact facts. On October 22, Canouville had been created a Baron of the Empire, so he could not have been in disfavor on that date. If his being sent to Portugal was at the Emperor's behest, Napoleon must have discovered his relations with Pauline late in October or early November. Assuming this to be so, what probably happened, according to Masson, was that the Emperor took Pauline severely to task for her conduct and scolded her with more than his customary severity, whereupon the Princess left the court in a huff. "I am leaving tomorrow at eleven o'clock," says a note of hers written November 6. "I shall be in Paris at four. My health obliges me to leave Fontainebleau." So brusque a departure seems to imply a special reason, for her mother did not leave until the tenth and Napoleon stayed on until the sixteenth of the month. On November 9, the Emperor wrote to Berthier: "Send off one of your officers now in Paris with orders not to return except with news of the Army in Portugal." Canouville was not mentioned, but it is not improbable Napoleon named him verbally to Berthier. At all events,

it was Pauline's new lover who went on the mission to Portugal. Burning to be back in her arms as soon as possible, Berthier's Booby rode the six hundred leagues between Paris and Salamanca at a gallop. From that point his further adventures may be traced in the *Mémoires* of General Thiébault and General Marbot.

At Salamanca one evening Thiébault was finishing a game of chess with the Duchess of Abrantès when a servant announced M. de Canouville, and a piteous voice was heard begging food and shelter for a worn-out, famished traveler. As a face, rivaling the voice in misery, came through the doorway, it was greeted with an outburst of laughter.

"Everyone rose and went towards him, with exclamations appropriate to the doleful get-up of this dandy of the Court, this most fashionable of the young men of the day, to the mud with which he was covered, and the disorder of his dress. 'Canouville!—you!—he! Is it possible?—how?—why?'

"After having told us he was the bearer of despatches for the Prince of Essling, with orders to discover an army which in Paris was supposed to be lost, he came to the real motive of his journey, and repeated to all of us twenty times what he declared he could not tell anybody once, what everybody knew, what he was all on fire to tell us,—that he had recently become the lover of Pauline Bonaparte, Princess Borghese. While he related the details of his adventure he mingled them

with alas's and sighs fit, as the Duchess said, to blow the candles out."

He said he was starving, so a meal was prepared, but he sat before it talking and forgot to eat. Until past midnight he kept them up, still talking. The General ordered a bed made up for him in the sitting room—to which Canouville demurred. Thiébault inquired the reason.

"I am too unhappy to sleep alone."

"But you don't want to sleep with me?"

"No, General, but pray have a bed made for me in your room."

The wearied General got little sleep that night; he had to hear all over again the story of the dragoon's happiness and misfortunes, of the charms of the Princess, and the depth of his passion for her.

Although he had told him so the night before, Thiébault had again in the morning to impress on Canouville's excitable mind that he could not just then continue beyond Salamanca because communication with the Army in Portugal was entirely cut off. He must wait until it was reëstablished. Canouville could not endure the thought of such inactivity.

"What would be the good of my staying here?" he exclaimed. "My despatches will go just as well with yours as by themselves. What impropriety would there be in my handing them to you?"

"I should not receive them," replied the General.

"And if I left them on your desk?"

"Well, I should have to have them taken up. But you would not get any receipt for them; you would remain responsible, and I should report the matter."

Canouville promptly persuaded himself that he would be taking an important piece of news back to Paris if he returned saying it was impossible to communicate with Masséna. Thiébault replied that he had already reported this fact to Berthier twenty times, and added that it would be ridiculous for Canouville to ride back all that distance only to get a severe rebuke. The dragoon declared that for him an hour passed at Paris was worth a whole lifetime. "Finding this a sublime reply and reason, he departed on the strength of them, crossed all the north of Spain without taking a single man to escort him, reached Paris at night, was run down at once, and forced to decamp at daybreak." Three weeks later he was back in Salamanca, quite crestfallen, asking for his despatches. He at length got through to Masséna with them, their military value wholly out of date. There was one, however, which could still be acted on—it instructed the Prince of Essling to keep M. de Canouville with him until further orders.

Marshal Masséna was at Guarda making arrangements to hold the upper Tagus when these two months' old despatches of Berthier's reached him. Instead of proceeding with his movement he wasted several days in drawing up replies to them; though signed by the chief of staff, he knew the Emperor was behind them.

The enemy, however, utilized this delay to bring up troops and attack, with the result that the French were forced to evacuate Guarda. Thus there was added to an already long historic roll another instance of the far-reaching effects of a woman's charms. M. de Canouville doubtless saw no connection between his doubling back to Paris for an hour with Pauline and the defeat of Masséna's troops at Guarda. He was busy talking again.

"The conversation of this modern Lauzun," says General Marbot, "amused us greatly, as he gave us the latest news of what had been taking place in the Paris drawing rooms during our absence, and we laughed much at the contrast between his elegant costume and the dilapidations of our uniforms after a year's campaigning. Canouville, who at first was much astonished by his rapid transition from Parisian boudoirs to a bivouac among the rocks of Portugal, soon resigned himself to the change. He was a man of good wit, and of courage."

The dashing dragoon eventually found his way back to Pauline and Paris accepted their relationship almost as a legitimate marriage. Anecdotes abound of their intimacy and indiscretion: some true, others partly so, most of them pure fabrications. As characteristic as any of those that can be told is the well-known one in which Canouville, Pauline, and her dentist figure. There are several variants of the tale, but the following version includes all its salient points—and implications.

The dentist Bousquet, a naïve soul but very expert operator, was called to Neuilly to extract a tooth that was giving the Princess severe and constant pain. On entering her chamber he also found there, idly lounging on a chaise longue, a handsome young man in silken dressing-gown, and with all the appearance of having only just risen from bed. At sight of the dental instruments, Pauline recoiled in terror and refused to have the tooth removed. Her companion strove to soothe her and encourage her to go through the ordeal which he assured her would be of the briefest duration.

"For the past three nights," he said, "you have done nothing but cry, so that neither of us has had a wink of sleep. Why not have it over with now? Of what are you afraid? A few seconds of pain now will save you hours of prolonged agony."

"That is easy enough for you to say, but not so easy to do," replied Pauline.

"Nonsense! It's just nothing at all. A child could stand it without a whimper."

"I'd like to see you stand it."

"Would you, indeed? Very well, I'll have one out just to show you how easy it is."

Stepping over to the dentist he pointed to a tooth just beginning to decay and told him to remove it. In a twinkling it was out, and with no cry of pain. Pauline was so touched by this proof of devotion that she controlled her fears and submitted to the dreaded operation. Shortly after this M. Bousquet was one of a group

where the conversation turned on the number of great ladies at court who had lovers; the Emperor's sisters were mentioned, Pauline in particular.

"Oh, but you cannot include her," protested the good dentist, "she is surely an exception. I was at Neuilly the other day and saw her in private with her husband. They are a model pair; it would be impossible to imagine a more perfect union. Actually they behaved as though still on their honeymoon."

Nothing could persuade M. Bousquet that he had mistaken Jules de Canouville for Prince Borghese.

* * *

BOOK FOUR

§ I

The Empire at Its Height—Pauline's Renewed Beauty—Mardi-Gras Ball, 1811

WITH strikingly synchronous rhythm, the power and extent of Napoleon's Empire, the greatness of his personal achievement, and the career of his beautiful sister, all reached their highest point in the brief period between the Emperor's second marriage and the Russian campaign of 1812. His personality at last appeared to be wholly dissociated from his family which had hitherto pressed upon it so closely and so disastrously. His union with the descendant of the most illustrious of European dynasties put the capstone upon his self-confidence; he relied now solely upon himself. Everything seemed to favor him in the early months of 1811, and to augur well for a long future for his vast Empire. With the birth of the King of Rome he felt assured of a dynasty of his own blood and exultingly exclaimed, "Now begins the finest epoch of my reign." The marvelous brain, so long disciplined by the iron will, showed the first signs of intoxication with the grandeur of its creations and the splendor of the stage upon which its puppets moved.

At this apogee of the Empire's magnificence, Pauline's beauty blossomed anew, as if challenging time to mar or diminish it. With nymph-like allure she traversed the social scene secure in the knowledge that no woman outshone her or could outbid her for the favors and triumphs dearest to a woman's heart. The crescendo of life was bringing all her special attributes, habits, and characteristics to their climacteric. Her passion for dress and jewels was indulged without limit, but the incomparable effects she achieved made it easy to forgive her extravagance. Her repartees were more disconcerting than ever, with perhaps more point to them than in former years; the experiences of the past decade had deepened and broadened her knowledge of life in many of its aspects, good and bad. The contradictions and inconsistencies of her character remained constant, but many had a charm that increased her attractiveness. The worship of her body was fervent as ever; she tended it as a priestess does the shrine of her faith; but this unceasing care was necessary to preserve its beauty. She took a sensuous delight in her loveliness, admiring it as a creation of her own genius. The frequent and frank exposure of herself partially or wholly nude had in it something of the artist proudly exhibiting a chef-d'œuvre. Nature, moreover, had not endowed her with either the feeling or the idea of modesty in the Anglo-Saxon understanding of the word. Pauline was as nearly amoral as it is possible for a

civilized person to be, and this fact must be constantly borne in mind when passing judgment upon her. But amid all the caprices of her mind and heart, despite the superficiality of her life and thoughts, with all her extravagance and self-indulgence, trivial occupations, concern for her beauty, passion for admiration, and perpetual succession of light loves, Pauline's attachment to Napoleon remained unchanged and unshakable. This deeply flowing undercurrent of love for the hero-brother was the true leit-motif of Pauline Bonaparte's being; her Narcissism was secondary and subordinate, however externally prominent.

As the time for Marie Louise's confinement approached the Emperor assembled around her the youngest and loveliest women of his court, with orders to see that she was kept constantly entertained and her mind diverted from the ordeal through which she must soon pass. He commanded balls, quadrilles, and parties of every description; no one in a position to give them was excused from the obligation. Upon Pauline he made special demands, for in the social sphere he knew she would not fail him, and that beauty, brilliance, and gaiety would attend her wherever she went. He particularly requested her not to confine herself to the small circle of her intimates, but to attend the court balls and entertainments and those given by Hortense and the leading personages of the Imperial hierarchy. In addition to giving her regular weekly receptions and dances,

he asked her to organize a grand costume ball during the carnival period, and to lead a symbolic quadrille at a ball in the Tuileries on the evening of Mardi-Gras, February 26, 1811. The Princess responded nobly to her brother's appeal, although the activities involved told heavily on her limited store of strength. For at least five nights in every week from January to well into March she played her rôle of Queen of Beauty and Fashion to the full satisfaction of Napoleon. Few men would have been equal to such a physical effort as Pauline's task called for; she was wise enough to conserve her strength as much as possible. When she went out in the daytime it was not altogether love of ease that led her to recline at full length on the eiderdown cushions of her sedan chair, borne slowly and carefully by the two giant footmen in green livery.

The season was magnificent enough to satisfy the Emperor's feverish desire for luxuriant and spectacular display. Night after night he passed from one splendid ball or entertainment to another, finding everywhere lovely women in superb gowns, with countless precious stones gleaming on their bare arms, necks, and bosoms, and his generals and statesmen, resplendent in gold and silver laced uniforms, dancing or paying court to them.

In the fancy quadrille at the Tuileries on February 26, for which eight days of rigorous rehearsals had been required, the Princess added another to her list of long-remembered social triumphs. She had elected to

represent Rome as symbolizing Italy and had designed a costume with exquisite taste and skill. Her entrance upon the ballroom floor was literally awe-inspiring in its effect. Some likened it to the descent of a celestial being in the midst of a luminous ray; others could only compare it to an apparition from a mythological land of faëry. "She was," says the Duchess of Abrantès, "the most perfect idea of beauty that can be imagined." She wore on her head a light helmet of burnished gold surmounted by ostrich feathers of dazzling whiteness. Over her breast was a small shield of golden scales, to which was attached a tunic of gold embroidered muslin. The most ravishing part of her appearance, in Laura's opinion, were her beautiful arms and legs. The former were encircled by golden bracelets set with the finest of cameos. Her feet were shod with little sandals of purple silk with gold bands, and at each point where the bands crossed the leg, a cameo was affixed. The ornament that held the shield to her bosom was the gem of the Borghese cameo collection, the one representing Medusa dying. Those who remembered their classics were instantly reminded of the goddess Athene whose distinguishing attribute is the shield bearing the famous Gorgon's head. In her hand, Pauline carried a light lance embossed with gold and precious stones. She moved slowly and languorously to her place, an ideal being from a world of phantasy, with the white shadows of her plumes dancing and undulating in the shining surface of the gold helmet. Every motion, every atti-

tude, was grace itself, and held the observers spell-bound. When the quadrille ended, a nymph representing Egeria presented Pauline with a magic mirror in which was depicted a happy and glorious destiny.

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§ II

Summer and Autumn of 1811—Aix-la-Chapelle—Montrond—Return of De Canouville, and His Banishment to the Army in Russia—Pauline's Consequent Ill-humor—Withdrawal to Neuilly in Spring of 1812

AFTER a wearying round of festivities incident to the entertainment of the Kings and Princes who had come to Paris for the ceremonies attendant upon the birth and baptism of the King of Rome, Pauline spent a few weeks at Neuilly. There she could receive in the more intimate manner she preferred, limiting her guests to the members of her particular coterie, and giving little dinners of not over ten covers, with music, singing, or dancing afterwards.

On June 25 she set out for the waters and baths of Aix-la-Chapelle, her brother Jérôme accompanying her as far as Brussels. Her mother had already preceded her, but this year was not to occupy the same establishment with Pauline. Madame Mère's frugal spirit was outraged by her daughter's expensive mode of living; she had no desire to share the cost of a household ruled over by the Princess. Pauline's expenses in a single

month at Aix are known to have exceeded 125,000 francs. The internal arrangement of the house she had engaged did not please her, so all its partitions had to be taken down and reconstituted to suit her wayward fancy, and she had to pay for the changes. Desiring entire privacy at the baths, she took over an entire wing of the building for her sole use, a special luxury that cost 2,000 francs. She dispensed lavish presents and gratuities. Coral and diamond necklaces, bracelets, gold-mounted combs, snuffboxes of gold and silver were bestowed on all who ministered to the comfort or pleasure of Her Imperial Highness. No one of any consequence was forgotten, from the prefect to M. Delacroix, the specialist in abdominal belts. To the prefect, Pauline gave a plaster bust of herself. He was so overwhelmed, prose was inadequate to express his appreciation. He burst into poetry that defies translation and admits of only the roughest paraphrase:

—Ye Gods! How noble is her face, how soft her eye!
Before her, Egypt's Cleopatra pales,
Greece turns away from Venus' shrine,
While Gaul enraptured clasps her feet.—

Cold and rainy weather prevailed at Aix that summer, conditions that the physicians there felt were precisely those the Princess should avoid. They advised a stay of several weeks at Spa and prescribed the remedies to be used if her pleasures or other circumstances brought on an acute recurrence of her peculiar ailments. After leaving Spa late in September, she made a brief

visit to Antwerp to see Napoleon who was on an extensive tour of the Low Countries studying their fortifications and economic conditions, and introducing the Empress to his Dutch and Flemish subjects.

At Spa, a M. de Montrond found his way into Pauline's circle and the idle chatter of the watering-place at once assumed a liaison. Later writers have taken the gossip for fact and included this unprepossessing, middle-aged libertine on the roster of Pauline's accepted lovers. No proof or trustworthy evidence for such an assumption can be found, and the attribution is not even plausible. De Montrond was one of Talleyrand's most disreputable tools whom Napoleon justly suspected of carrying on a treasonable correspondence with agents of the English Government. Exiled from Paris since 1809, he had recently been arrested and imprisoned at Ham by order of the Emperor who knew him to be mixed up in the obscure intrigues of Talleyrand. Napoleon's opinion of this dissolute royalist was summed up in the words: "There will be no morals in France as long as M. de Montrond remains in it." Masson's researches clearly indicate that if De Montrond was paying court to some one in the vicinity of the Princess, the lady in question was Madame de Saluces and not Pauline. Years later, however, De Montrond entertained the "bloods" and rakes of the London clubs with highly colored tales of the seamy side of social life under the Empire, and it is known that he lied most particularly and atrociously about the Princess Borghese. If this

argues any connection with her, it can only be the rage of a rejected suitor, still venomously nursing the memory of his disappointment. Thomas Creevey, Member of Parliament, met De Montrond and asked Lord Sefton who he was. His Lordship answered: "A roué who has no visible means of living, and one of the best houses going in Paris." Creevey was appalled by De Montrond's talk and character and wrote him down as "an infernal scoundrel and the worst mannered man I ever saw"—and clubmen of the Regency were not squeamish. Such a man could never have found favor in the eyes of Pauline Bonaparte.

But, flitting about the Princess that summer during her journeys from Aix to Spa and from Spa to Antwerp, was a mysterious stranger in the guise of a Russian colonel whose true identity has never been discovered. Official mention of him is found in a report to Savary, Minister of Police, by a secret agent who was evidently keeping a watchful eye on Pauline, possibly by Napoleon's order, but this is not certain.

"While she was at Antwerp," writes M. Bellemare, "a Russian colonel named Kouloukorff, who had been received by the Princess at Aix-la-Chapelle, took up his residence in Malines. From there he went every day into Antwerp, arriving at dark and leaving soon after daybreak. I believe his visits ceased prior to the departure of Madame de Saluces."

As Madame de Saluces (the former Mademoiselle Millo) was one of the Princess's principal ladies, this

was a discreet way of indicating, without direct mention of Pauline, that the stranger's visits were made to the house where Pauline lodged. Nothing whatever is known of this Russian colonel: he had never been seen before his appearance at Aix, he was never heard of again, and the name by which he went appears in no official or other contemporary list of foreign officers then known to be in France. Could he have been De Canouville? The conjecture has been made and supported with some plausibility. Berthier's aide had fought valiantly at the battle of Fuentès de Oñoro on May 5, and appears to have returned to France some time afterward. Pauline, of course, would be his first objective, wherever she was, but past experience dictated caution in being seen in her neighborhood, especially Paris when the Emperor was there. To disguise himself and go in pursuit of his idolized lady was just the sort of adventure to appeal to a romantic dragoon on fire with love. Whether he was the Russian colonel or not, De Canouville revealed himself openly at Neuilly when the Princess returned there early in October, her arrival and his reappearance coinciding significantly. Napoleon was still in Holland and Belgium and not expected back in the capital for some weeks. The lovers resumed their frank and open intimacy, Pauline joyous at recovering her handsome, amusing, boyish, and hopelessly infatuated adorer, and De Canouville blind to everything save the happiness of being once more with the beautiful woman he loved

so madly. They threw themselves into every kind of amusement and diversion and for a whole month were uninterrupted in their glamorous adventure. On November 20, Pauline gave the first of a projected series of her favorite small parties with dancing and music by Julien's orchestra. De Canouville was present, although he must have known of the Emperor's return to Saint-Cloud on November 11. Apparently, both the heedless lover and his Imperial lady had thrown discretion to the winds. Nemesis descended upon them. Four days after Pauline's party, Berthier received the following instructions from Napoleon:

"Order Major Canouville to report at Danzig where he will take up his duties with the Second Chasseur Regiment. You will send his commission to him at Wesel; it is at the War Office and I have already signed it. From this date he ceases to be your aide-de-camp. Inform him that he is not to return to Paris on any pretext whatsoever, unless he has a direct order to do so from you."

There was no mistaking the clean-cut meaning of this order nor all that it implied. The soldier had to obey without question; the Princess took the sentence with outward submission and inward despair. She was very fond of this gay and devoted admirer, and the separation moved her deeply. To the Emperor she showed no sign of resentment, made no protest, but began quietly to use all her influence to secure Canouville's exchange to another regiment or post that would

bring him nearer to her. Her submissiveness aroused her brother's suspicions. Knowing her resources when thwarted and the determination she could show in endeavoring to gain a desired end, he subjected her to the closest surveillance. On November 29, Pauline had occasion to send a messenger down to the Leclerc estate at Montgobert on some family business. Napoleon knew of it at Saint-Cloud the next morning and immediately wrote to Savary: "What is the meaning of this courier whom Princess Pauline has sent to Soissons? Find out about it."

During the ensuing season the Princess participated as usual in the social life of the court. She held her customary weekly receptions, gave the dances the Emperor especially commanded, attended the balls at the Tuileries and others where her presence was expected on account of her position and family relationship. Her beauty was still at the height of its splendor, ever winning more and new adorers, and impressing itself so indelibly upon the memory of those who beheld it that through them it became a legend that lasted for generations. But her manner now was half-hearted and indifferent in public, irritable and jangly in private. She lashed out at her domestics for the least oversight of duty or misconstruction of orders. "Yesterday," she writes to an officer of her household, "I myself ordered Grange to admit no one to me except M. de Tonnerre, Madame de Brignole, my physician, and members of my family. He has paid no attention to my instructions

and this morning allowed Madame de Chambaudoin to enter. I am extremely displeased at this. I desire you to inform him that the next time he disobeys an order I give him, he will be dismissed instantly. I also dislike his constantly leaving the gates of the palace open; this is not as I wish it. As soon as a carriage has passed through, the gates should at once be closed." In May she retired to Neuilly, and secluded herself in a cottage on the estate attended only by a maid, a porter, and her chair-bearers. Her orders were explicit: "No one is to be admitted to Villiers under any circumstances except by permission of Her Imperial Highness."

Murat came to Paris on May 4, and Pauline seized the occasion to beg him to get Canouville appointed to his staff and out of the Second Chasseurs where he was suffering tortures under a brute of a colonel. Murat, like other men, could never refuse his lovely sister-in-law anything she asked, and at once made application to General Clarke, the Minister of War, for Canouville's services as aide-de-camp. "If you grant this request," he added, "please send his commission to the Emperor's headquarters." But the wary Minister knew the ground was hot wherever De Canouville was concerned, and transmitted Murat's petition to the Emperor himself. Through Berthier came the cold reply that "he did not find it convenient to appoint Major de Canouville one of the aides-de-camp to the King of Naples." It was her last effort on her lover's behalf; she could do no more. So, early in the month of June,

De Canouville headed his troop towards that fatal Russia which was to destroy the finest army ever led by man; while Pauline, bereft of one of the few men for whom she had felt a genuine and continued affection, heartsick and suffering from both real and imagined ills, turned for rest and solace to the waters of Aix in Savoy.

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§ III

Aix-les-Bains, 1812—Serious Illness—Colonel Duchand—Excursion to Hautecombe, September 7, 1812

AIX-LES-BAINS, in all its long history as a fashionable health resort, has rarely known a more brilliant summer season than that of 1812. Bathers and drinkers of the waters thronged it early; by midsummer the humblest lodging could only be had at a fabulous price. The personnel of the visitors represented the cream of the Empire's social register. Besides the Princess Borghese, the Empress Josephine was there, also Madame Mère, Cardinal Fesch, the Queen of Spain and her sister Désirée, now wife of Bernadotte, Crown Prince of Sweden, Napoleon's old companion in arms who at that very moment was engaged in a shameful betrayal of the Emperor to whom he owed his fortune and exalted position. Of lesser rank, but scarcely less social prominence were the Duchess of Abrantès, the Duchess of Ragusa (wife of Marshal Marmont), Madame de Rambuteau, Madame Doumerc, Madame Lallemant, Madame de Sémonville, Madame de Menou, and many others. Men were few

in number; they were with the armies battling in the Peninsula and far-off Russia.

Pauline had a small house to herself, La Maison Chevalay, situated on a hillside in the outskirts of Aix, and separated from the highroad by a flourishing vineyard. Its windows looked out on a magnificent view of far-flung mountains, amongst them the Grand Revard, at whose base lay the green and lovely valley in which nestled the little town amongst its spreading trees and gushing waters. The smooth running of the household was assured through its supervision by M. de Forbin, restored to his post of chamberlain but not to the place once held in the Princess's affections. For weeks her health was in a deplorable state; she was in almost constant pain which no remedies or treatments seemed able to alleviate. Dr. Buzzini, a skilled Geneva physician, was called in consultation, but had to confess himself baffled. Then Corvisart, the Emperor's favorite medical adviser, was summoned from Paris. He did not agree with his colleagues who thought there was a state of acute inflammation throughout the abdominal region. Had there been such an inflammation in this area, he said, the Princess would long since have succumbed. As a principal cause of her maladies, he diagnosed an extreme nervous susceptibility which from time to time produced the most bizarre pathological anomalies. The present crisis, he believed, had been induced by the sudden appearance of all these phenomena in combination, instead of singly or by slow

degrees, as on previous occasions. "A series of rare complications," he wrote, "has resulted in a condition that is a malady *sui generis*, of which I do not think the exact nature and limits are known. A thousand times unhappy is the Princess who suffers from it, and equally unfortunate the physicians called upon to bring the aid of their art to so ambiguous a case." Throughout August she continued to suffer excruciatingly in spite of daily soft water baths and the frequent application of leeches and powerful vesicants to the parts affected. For four weeks she subsisted entirely on a diet of whey.

As the summer wore on, some slight improvement took place, and she was able to go out in her chair, or receive small groups of friends. A favorite diversion was having Talma, the greatest actor of the day, read or declaim parts from Shakespeare and Molière. On these occasions her visitors found her reclining on a chaise longue, dressed in the most captivating of convalescent négligés. An English boudoir cap with bows of pink ribbon rested on her dark hair. The dressing-gown was of Indian muslin with open-worked embroidery, bordered with pale-rose muslin, and fastened with bow knots of similar material. The stole and trimmings were of English point lace. "In the midst of her muslins, laces, and bows, she looked as lovely as an angel." Her conversation dealt chiefly with her ills and the remedies prescribed for them. She was naïvely explicit in narrating the kinds of medicine and number of douches she was required to take.

Jules de Canouville was much in her thoughts. Like most of the other women at Aix whose men were in the armies of the Emperor, Pauline was nervously anxious all that summer regarding the safety of her brother and lover. News of Napoleon came through quickly by numerous and sure channels, but from Jules she heard only irregularly and after long delays. At times she grew so disturbed when no word came that she despatched special couriers to the battle-front to learn the latest news of him. Ill as she was in August, she dictated letters to the head of her Paris household specifying in detail the design and decorations of a splendid sword she wished sent to De Canouville. "Above all, do not forget that the diamonds which are to ornament the hilt must be inserted in such a way that they can be easily put in or taken out as desired."

Yet, true to her dominating instincts, Pauline craved the immediate, visible admiration of men. Sick or well, existence without it was insufferable. Fate was good to her and provided two devoted slaves to fill this need of her soul during those long weeks of illness and enforced abstention from general society. One was Colonel Auguste Duchand, a handsome and distinguished young artillery officer, slowly recovering from nearly fatal wounds received at the siege of Valencia; the other was Talma, as perfervid and romantic a lover off the stage as on. Duchand's attentions were so constant, the tattlers accused him of keeping a sentinel's guard over her. If true, one can only view it as a tribute to the

irresistible charm of the beautiful Princess and the deep sincerity of the gallant officer's admiration. Whenever her strength permitted her to walk out a little, it was on his arm she leaned, her dainty hand sheltered under his blue dolman.

In some inexplicable way, her intimacy with Talma escaped the lynx eyes of both friends and foes at Aix. Not until a hundred years later did the world come to know of it.

During one of the brief periods when her health permitted the effort, Pauline organized an excursion by water to the Abbey of Hautecombe, a Cistercian monastery on Lake Bourget at the foot of the *Mont du Chat*. Twenty persons were in the party, including Colonel Duchand in full dress uniform with colback, gorget, and *sabretache*, Talma, the Duchess of Abrantès, and Maurice de Balincourt to whom Laura had completely lost her heart. The Princess was carried down in her palanquin to the place of embarkation arriving, as always, late. She wore a polonais with underskirt of richly embroidered percale, trimmed with magnificent Valencienne lace. Her hat of Italian straw bore three immense plumes, scarlet in color, with ribbons to match. After luncheon, they visited the Abbey, which had been the burial place of the Princes of Savoy until 1731, M. de Forbin explaining its architectural features and historic associations. In the early hours of the evening the party reëmbarked for Aix. The date was September 7, and all that day the sons of France had

been fighting on the Borodino the bloodiest battle of the century. Over the smooth waters of the lake the boats slowly returned, the rhythmic sound of the oars alone breaking the silence of the summer night. Everyone in the party felt the romantic thrill of the time, the place, and scene as the shadows grew deeper over the surface of the water. Pauline saw Maurice's hand steal out in search of Laura's soft fingers, youthful and white as tulip petals. Welling up in her memory came the verses of Petrarch that Fréron had taught her. Spontaneously she began to repeat them:

Levommi il mio pensiere in parte ov'era
Quella ch'io cerca è più non trova in terra.
Ivi fra lor che'l terzio cerchio serra
La rividi più bella è men altera.*

The vision of her, sitting upright in the prow of the boat, held her hearers spellbound—she seemed the veritable divinity of the lake. The emotion of more than one found vent in silent tears as she recited:

Che fai? Che pensi? . . . Che pur indietro guardi
Nel tempo che tornar non puote omai,
Amma sconsolata!**

* I rose, my mind partly where was
She whom I seek and find no more on earth.
There among those whom the third circle encloses
I saw her again, more beautiful and less proud.

Sonnet 261

** What doest thou? What art thou thinking? . . .
That thou even lookest back
To the time that can never again return,
Unhappy soul!

Sonnet 232

It was a scene from the dreamlands of love and poesy. The sight and sound of her evoked an ideal voluptuousness of sensation as she repeated the familiar yet ever new lines of the great Renaissance poet. Behind the mask of the poet's verses, Pauline was giving utterance to her own longings, her own unquenchable thirst for love.

"That night," said Junot, Duke of Abrantès, "was one of the most horrible I ever passed! We had no provisions, the cold rain poured incessantly, we had no wood to kindle fires, and groans and cries of agony resounded on every side." For him, as for Laura, Duchess of Abrantès, the evening of September 7, 1812, was a memorable one.

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§ IV

Talma's Letters to Pauline

THE passion of Talma for the Princess Borghese appears to have been wholly unsuspected in the latter's circle, and altogether unknown to historians of the Napoleonic era, until 1911 when it was revealed to the world by Fleischmann and Bart in their edition of the great tragedian's burning love letters to Pauline. For years, the actor's own drafts and copies of them had lain unnoticed in the Bibliothèque Mazarin to which they had been bequeathed by Talma's friend, the dramatist, Pierre Lebrun.

Talma in his youth and early manhood had paid strangely little attention to women. Absorbed utterly in his art, his nervous, sensitive, romantic mind dwelt in an unreal world of phantasy and dramatic imagery. "I live in the moon and hurl my slop-jar at the earth," reads one of his scribbled notes. Physical desire and passion did not awaken in him until middle life, and he then gave rein to them with characteristic ardor. He played the lover in private with the same genius and abandon that he displayed in his stage presentations of the part. Not without good reason does one of

his biographers exclaim: "Ask the women whose love filled his heart and charmed his hours of leisure, ask them if he knew how to love!"

Napoleon, from the early days of the Consulate, had been an enthusiastic admirer of the actor, treating him as a personal friend and often inviting him to private gatherings made up almost exclusively of members of the Imperial family to most of whom he came to be as well known privately as publicly. Talma, who loved the grandeur of kings, courts, and aristocracy, responded to all this with an unbounded hero-worship of the Emperor that nothing ever weakened or destroyed, not even Elba or Waterloo. He was one of the faithful few who bade Napoleon farewell at Malmaison when the fallen monarch was preparing to go into exile, and while there was a witness of the Emperor's parting from Madame Mère—a Spartan scene, poignant beyond words. Letitia, all signs of emotion rigidly suppressed save two tears that would gush forth, extended her hand to Napoleon saying just three words: "*Adieu, mon fils!*" "*Ma mère, adieu!*" replied her son. They embraced and parted forever in this world.

His close relations with the Bonapartes being so well recognized, Talma's presence at Aix and frequent appearances in Pauline's drawing room in the summer of 1812 excited no special comment and aroused no curious suspicions. He, like others, had come to drink the waters for their curative effects, and his dramatic readings from Molière for the entertainment of the

Princess and her friends was equally natural in the eyes of the world. Artists are always at the command of their rich and powerful patrons. Behind the veil of accepted conventions Pauline and Talma enacted a drama of love as intense, moving, and passionate as any he ever played at the Comédie Française. He was forty-nine years old at the time.

Except for a short visit to Lyons where he gave eleven performances, Talma was at Aix from July until the middle of September. He left there on September 14 for Geneva and his first letter to Pauline is dated two days later.*

September 16, 1812.

I have left you at last, my love, and am now separated from you and for a long, long time. You commanded it; my going was necessary for your repose; I was obliged to submit to your will. But it is a frightful sacrifice that you have imposed on me. Your goodness, the tears that flowed from your eyes, the consolations you poured into my torn heart, could not lessen the bitterness of my regret at parting from you, but they did leave a ray of hope that I should not be soon forgotten by you! I set out at daybreak yesterday and looked up at your windows for the last time. With my eyes fixed on your chamber, I said good-bye to you in my thoughts. Tears came and sobs choked me as I sent

* The following translations are abridged, selective, and without marks indicating omissions from the text, the extracts being confined to passages that serve the present writer's purpose only.

you from afar the tenderest hopes and wishes for your health and happiness. Multitudes of people were waiting here to see me. These tributes of public interest and regard, of which I should once have been so proud, touch me not at all now. Their only value in my eyes is that they may perhaps render me more worthy of your affection. Have pity on me, dear one, multiply the things that will keep us in touch with each other, link me to you in every possible way. If you do not write to me, my heart will be plunged into despair and I shall believe you have forgotten me. I promised you that I would destroy all your letters, and I repeat that pledge.

September 18, 1812.

I have been overwhelmed with visits and invitations, but have escaped from them as much as I could, for they only increase my torment. I want only to be alone, to be isolated with the memories of the happy hours passed with you, of all your tenderness and goodness. Never for an instant can I forget the moment of our parting, that cruel moment you sought to ease with the softest of caresses and most solemn promises.

September 21, 1812.

All the pleasure and happiness of my past life has been effaced by that which I have known with you. I am conscious of but one event in my existence—the moment when I met you, loved you, and you thought me worthy of your affection, the moment when I

knew my destiny, whatever might betide, was henceforth to live for you alone.

September 22, 1812.

This morning I received your letter of the 20th. My love, no words can depict my emotion, my joy, my excitement when I read that you had wept while reading my letter. What a woman, or rather, what an angel from Heaven thou art! The power you exercise over me is limitless. I live only through you; you dwell within me and are the very source of life: you make the blood course through my veins, you cause my heart to beat, you thrill my senses, carrying upheaval, pain, and happiness to my heart. My whole being is absorbed by you. If ever you withdraw your hand from mine, dear love, I shall quit this life instantly.

My Pauline,—for I must call you by that dear, sweet name,—I prostrate myself at your feet, embracing them with transports of gratitude. Always you are kinder to me than I could believe possible, and your goodness surpasses all my hopes. On my knees, I beg you to let me come to you for a single hour.

September 25, 1812.

If I may not see you again, my love, help me to tear myself away from here; sustain me, restore my courage. One word, and I will set out, resigned, if need be, to the hideous sacrifice of never seeing you again. I will wait until Thursday evening for the courier

to bring an answer from you. Can you refuse me this? My love, if I cannot appeal to your affection, let it be to your pity. You know what I am suffering. Alas! from the very beginning of our liaison my life has been simply a succession of torments, anxieties, fears. My few moments of happiness have been all too short! At this time, when I am in utter despair, am I to receive no consolation from you?

September 28, 1812.

Pauline, you do not yet know the depths of my love for you, nor what wounds you have inflicted on my heart, nor with what idolatry it cherishes and reveres you. Pauline, Pauline, my heart is broken! I know you are going to leave on the 6th, but I had to learn of it from others. Pauline, you are leaving and I shall never see you again! Was there ever a fate like mine? Shall I receive any word from you tomorrow? Will you not write to me at Lyons? My God, how unhappy I am!

Pauline would not permit Talma to come to Aix again, nor would she promise to meet him at Lyons on her way south. Her letters were few and far between; she had illness and sorrow of her own to bear. It is doubtful if she ever again saw the tragic lover with whom she had whiled away some idle hours of a wearisome summer, though Talma continued to write his impassioned letters for nearly a year longer. But from

Dresden in July, 1813, he was pouring out equally burning words to a former mistress, Madame Bazire: "I adore you; I am mad about you, Angel and treasure, adieu. I cover you, deluge you, smother you with kisses, your little nose and all the rest of you."

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§ V

Death of De Canouville—At Hyères and Nice—Winter of 1812–13—Offers 300,000 Francs to Napoleon

SUMMER waned; one by one the leading figures at Aix departed. Madame Mère and Cardinal Fesch were the first to go, then Queen Julie and Désirée, and Josephine at the end of September. For Pauline, the doctors urgently advised an entire winter in the South. Corvisart was emphatic in pressing this opinion: "A warm climate is, I believe, a condition *sine qua non* for her positive improvement and cure. I have reiterated this to the Princess, the Emperor, and all the family." He reminded them also of his frequent protests against the heavy social duties imposed on the Princess in Paris which he believed exhausted her available strength, aggravated her maladies, and prevented the remedies and regimen he prescribed from having their proper effects. After a consultation in Paris at the end of August, Corvisart and Bouvier drew up a joint report, declaring that the resources of medicine and nature must be combined and utilized in order to produce a favorable result. "That which we

consider most indispensable is residence in a mild and warm climate throughout the winter. For the reëstablishment of the health of Her Imperial Highness we regard it as most important that there should be no delay in her proceeding South. She should reach there by the time of the next equinox and not return until the spring of 1813. Permission to do this should be asked for at once."

Early in September, therefore, the Princess sent off her request to the Emperor, not expecting a reply before October, but firmly resolved to go whatever his answer might be. "I cannot," she wrote, "disregard this advice of my doctors." She set October 3 as the provisional date of departure, planning to go first to Lyons, and then by boat down the Rhône for the rest of the journey. In the meantime she had Colonel Duchand as a devoted *cavaliere servente* for the sunny September days, and every post brought an inflammatory epistle from Talma to amuse her when alone.

News of the taking of Moscow reached Paris, September 27, and with it came word of the death of Jules de Canouville. M. de Saluces, one of the Emperor's equerries, sent a special message to M. David, of the Princess's Paris household. "The details the newspapers will give you, will bring sadness to your soul and despair to the heart of a high and noble lady. Canouville is no more. On his breast, covered with his blood, I found a portrait whose striking resemblance would have betrayed and compromised its original. I

alone saw it and put it safely away." It was sent to Murat, who made sure that it was eventually returned to the Princess.

No one dared tell the Princess her lover had fallen gloriously in battle. Receiving no letters from him and knowing that others around her had heard from friends or relatives in Russia, her anxiety became acute and she instituted special inquiries. Some one at last sent her the name and date of a particular newspaper. She sent for the issue immediately and from it learned of her loss. There was reason for the importunate Talma's receiving no replies to his letters.

"The frightful news is known now," wrote her maître d'hôtel on October 25, "and ever since it arrived this lovable lady has suffered unimaginably. It must be witnessed to be believed, and it will be a long time before anyone can speak to her of her grievous loss. She weeps continuously, eats scarcely a thing, and is obviously endangering her health. My only hope is that the approaching journey may do something to assuage her heartbreaking grief." With the passing of De Canouville, the Princess not only lost one of whom she was sincerely fond, but with him she saw disappear a part of her youth. She knew something had gone from her which could never be recaptured.

Pauline left Aix, October 27, embarking on a rough and stormy Lake Bourget and making her first stop at Lyons where she visited Cardinal Fesch for a few days. Very weary and depressed, she reached Marseilles

on November 9 and stayed there the rest of the month. She arrived at Hyères, December 3. "This journey has been insupportable," wrote Mademoiselle de Quincy. "Her health is unchanged. She has been here four days and is no better. She tried her milk diet again but it did not agree with her, so she is now taking only soup. The pains are also very severe and blisters have again been applied. It is desolating. May God help us!"

Memories of Canouville haunted her; she clung to personal souvenirs of him like a devotee to saints' relics. From locks of his hair that she had carefully preserved, she had a bracelet woven and made a vow to wear it the rest of her life. From his brother she asked for the return of the gifts she had made to Jules, and anything that would serve as a memento of him. Such immediate comfort as she enjoyed came from the presence and devotion of Colonel Duchand who had followed her to Hyères. But the Colonel's leave of absence expired in January and his application for its extension was curtly refused by the Minister of War who ordered him to join the Grand Army immediately. From Bautzen to Waterloo he performed prodigies of valor, and was created a Baron of the Empire at Leipzig for successfully hurling back with his twelve pieces of ordnance 25,000 of the enemy supported by thirty cannon. It was a brave soldier and a great gentleman who loved the sick and sorrowful Princess at Hyères.

The Emperor wished her to return to Paris and

appear at court, but this she was quite unfit to do and told him so. He was always sceptical about her illnesses, believing them to be largely imaginary, feigned, or not nearly so serious as she represented them. This time, however, he did her an injustice; she was really in a precarious condition, being scarcely able to support the motion of a carriage, and taking air and exercise only in a gently borne sedan chair. Napoleon gave a grudging consent to her going to Nice.

"I have your letter of 20th January," he wrote. "I am distressed to notice how bad your health is. You would have done better to come to Paris, than to have allowed yourself to be sent from place to place by doctors who hope to do you good. You would have done better to go to Nice than to Hyères. I see no objection to your going to that town."

After Duchand's departure Pauline showed herself increasingly restless and discontented. Physical inactivity appeared to stir her brain to feverish energy. A cloud of letters poured out from her hand, and she turned her ladies and chamberlains into busy secretaries and correspondents. Her rooms became busier than the office of a Cabinet Minister—but hers was a Ministry of Caprices. The miserly side of her manifested itself in scores of needless, foolish economies, in downright stinginess, and a reluctance to pay her debts, although at this very same time she was expending 100,000 francs among the jewelers. Madame de Cavour complained bitterly to Pauline's *intendant*

at Paris because the Princess kept her supplies of stationery under lock and key, and the lady of honor had to pay out of her own pocket for the paper and sealing-wax she used in writing her mistress's letters. "It is bad enough," she wrote, "to be employed all day as a secretary; I ought not to be compelled to provide the stationery. The amount of writing I have to do for the Princess is simply enormous; send me immediately a large box of writing paper of various kinds, quill pens, Spanish wax, wafers, envelopes, etc." She attempted to excuse the petty economies introduced into her household management by citing the heavy fees paid to her physicians and the huge amounts expended while traveling. Large as these were, they were not responsible for the involved state of her finances, but rather her inordinate passion for jewels. While Madame de Cavour was deprived of stationery Pauline was negotiating in Paris for two strings of pearls at 50,000 francs each. "I will pay for them from the savings I can make in my dress allowance." She used no reason in such matters, but blindly yielded to the imperious urge for self-adornment. Suddenly deciding that the air from near-by swamps was affecting her adversely, she left Hyères on February 7 for Nice where she had great hopes of the climate benefiting her. No immediate improvement being forthcoming she grew unbearably irritable. The historians of Nice describe her at this time as giving dinners and fêtes and indulging in the maddest follies, but the accounts of her ladies, Madame de

Cavour and Mademoiselle de Quincy are more authoritative. "We see scarcely a living soul," wrote the former. "Our days are chiefly passed in seeing Her Highness moved from one bed to another."

Word came that Borghese was planning to go to Paris and expected to lodge in the Palace in the Rue Saint-Honoré. Instantly Pauline drafted elaborate instructions as to what he might do and what he might have there—but mainly what he might not. He would be allowed the use of certain rooms on the first floor, overlooking the courtyard, but the large blue and gold chamber, the orange one, the bath and billiard rooms were to be closed off. His own servants must keep the apartments in order and perform all the duties and services the Prince's residence would make necessary. They must close the jalousies to keep the sun out, and cover up the furniture in the salon when the Prince was not receiving or as soon as a reception was over. She would permit his suite the use of a few rooms on the second floor, but all the rest must be locked and the key left in the possession of her *intendant*. Coats would be placed at the disposition of the Prince's personal attendants, but the liveries must not be used. No linen and no wine was to be served out; no expense whatever was to be charged to the account of the Princess. "The Princess desires, however, that there be set aside for the Prince two or three bottles of West Indian liqueurs and as many of rum, but only for his personal use. As to her horses, they must not be driven beyond

the Bois de Boulogne, neither out into the country, nor in the hunting field."

Prince Borghese decided not to carry out the projected visit to Paris.

The epistolary flood flows on incessantly to her financial agent and stewards, to her gardeners and tradesmen, to artists and jewelers; official decrees, formal instructions, letters, brief notes, go out by every post, often to be contradicted or countermanded in the following one. Bosio is commanded to execute another marble bust of the Princess, taking careful plaster proofs of the first; flowering shrubs are to be brought from Montgobert or secured from the Imperial nurseries for the gardens in Neuilly and Paris; she orders snuffboxes, initialed and medallioned, with and without diamonds; the fagots from the vine-cuttings at Neuilly must be gathered up and sent to Nice, for she likes to kindle her fires with them; her jewels in Paris are to be brought to Nice where she can touch, feel, play with them and enjoy their flashing, glistening beauty; the little birds at Neuilly must be carefully looked after, no shooting is to be allowed, cats and magpies driven from the grounds—without order or logical connection a hundred different thoughts, interests, and purposes eddy about simultaneously and furiously in Pauline's emotion-governed mind.

Through February, March, and April no visible improvement occurs in health or spirits. Her attendants are in despair in the presence of this perpetual illness

no doctor understands, this weather-vane temperament that bored idleness exasperates even more than pain. From May to October, with the exception of a few unsatisfactory weeks at Aix, she was at Gréoux whose waters gave her almost instant relief and where her general condition showed gratifying signs of amelioration. She felt, however, that another winter in the South was necessary for complete restoration and wrote Napoleon to this effect. "I have received your letter," he replied from Dresden. "I note with regret that your bad health continues, and can only agree with the advice given you by your physicians. I approve of your staying in whatever place promises you a quick recovery and an early return to Paris."

Had she any inkling of the dangers threatening Napoleon's power and throne, of the storm clouds rolling up from every quarter of the geographical and political horizons and casting ominous shadows on the vast Imperial edifice he had reared? The answer is mixed, partly Yes, partly No. During the grave periods of her illness all knowledge of the unfavorable aspect of public affairs was sedulously kept from her, and silence imposed on everyone around her; even the servants in the Paris household were forbidden to mention any disturbing news in their letters to Nice. Even had she been fully informed of the defeats in battle and checks in policy suffered by the Emperor in 1813, their significance would probably have escaped her; she would not have been seriously alarmed. The personal

safety of Napoleon always concerned her deeply; for anything political she cared little and feared less. Pauline's faith in Napoleon's genius was absolute; doubt of it never entered her mind.

Nevertheless, from time to time bits of news of a disquieting nature filtered through to her; little incidents occurred that set her questioning, such as the recall of M. de Clermont-Tonnerre to his post in the Guards. Their effect was to quicken into life the strong telepathic connection always existing between Pauline and Napoleon. Impelled by no reasons drawn from known facts, but responding to insistent though vague and indefinable feelings which she could not repress, she despatched to Paris a portion of her jewels with instructions to sell them for the highest price obtainable. From other sources she assembled enough ready money to bring the total up to 300,000 francs, and this she offered outright to the Emperor. Again, a superb illustration of the oft-forgotten yet not uncommon truth that women of frivolous, capricious character, and even of light and easy morals, also possess qualities of a higher order and are capable of noble, unselfish acts. The Princess, alone of all the family, sensed the fact that Napoleon was in difficulties; money was the only form of aid she was in a position to proffer; unhesitatingly, she acted. If, normally, Pauline's heart was of ice, it could melt instantly under the pressure of her affection for this beloved brother. Of her present action she simply observed: "If he accepts, I shall continue

to be involved in debt, but that is a matter of no importance; I will cut down my expenses still further. I have done only what I ought to do for him." From Gotha, six days after his repulse by the Allied armies at Leipzig, Napoleon, still hotly pressed by Blücher, acknowledged Pauline's letter and gift:

"My Sister: I have received your letter of October 13. My expenses have been considerable this year and will be even greater during the coming one. I accept the gift you wish to make me, but the good will and the resources of my peoples are such that I believe my means are assured for meeting the enormous expenditure that the campaigns of 1814 and 1815 will require, whatever the outcome of events. If this European coalition against France is prolonged beyond that date, and I have not obtained the success I fully expect from the bravery and patriotism of the French, then I will make use of your gift and of all the gifts that my subjects may wish to offer me."

"This was," says Frédéric Masson, "the first letter he had ever addressed to her in this style, making her a confidante of his plans, revealing himself openly to the Paulette whom he was accustomed to treat as a spoiled child, whose caprices he laughed at or scolded, at the same time always preserving for her the affectionate tolerance of an elder brother, with a touch of tenderness in his attitude that was like an homage to her beauty. He now sensed the anxious trembling of her heart, full of fears for him; and, in imagination, kissed

the beautiful hands which were tendering him, to repair his disasters, the little gold she possessed. Because she had followed her instinct, she was the first and only one of his kin to realize their obligation to him, and to her he spoke these grave, calm words, Imperial words that only the favorite sister of Cæsar had a right to hear."

Late in October Pauline departed for Nice, in spite of urgent representations from Madame Mère that it would be more advisable for the Princess to come to Paris, put her financial and other affairs in order, and be prepared for whatever turn public events might take. Cautious and prudent as ever, the mother of the Bonapartes read the signs of the times more accurately than many others, and never took the future for granted. Pauline, however, was just then completely dominated by the new doctor attached to her household, M. Espiaud, who had acquired an unaccountable influence over her ("et qui sans doute n'est pas toute scientifique"), and insisted on residence at Nice throughout the winter. Doubtless he had everything to gain and nothing to lose by his advice; a return to Paris would, of course, have meant his displacement by Corvisart and other more prominent physicians. The Princess settled the matter by declaring that anyone who attempted to dissuade her from going to Nice simply desired her early death—an unanswerable argument from the lips of an indulged and self-willed woman. At Nice, her

health and her occupations were much as they had been the previous winter.

The arrival there on February 10, 1814, of Pope Pius VII, whom Napoleon, for reasons of policy, had recently released from his enforced detention at Fontainebleau, roused the Princess to an alarmed apprehension that events were occurring which might have a serious bearing on her fortunes and those of her brother.

* * *

§ VI

Fall of the Empire—Napoleon at Fontainebleau—Meets Pauline at Luc—Departs for Elba, April 28, 1814—Pauline Follows

FOR months, the great Empire had been hurtling to its fall. All Europe was in arms against it: Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Russia, Prussia, Spain, Sweden. Bernadotte, arch-betrayer, vehemently exhorted the Allied sovereigns to hold fast this time and destroy forever the power of the Emperor: "To accept a peace dictated by Napoleon is to rear a sepulchre for Europe." Blow after blow fell upon the hard-driven but still utterly self-confident Emperor. At Vittoria, in June, 1813, Wellington routed King Joseph and Marshal Jourdan, and the French cause in Spain collapsed. General Jomini, Swiss expert in the art of war, leaves Napoleon's side and goes over to the Allies. Moreau, victor of Hohenlinden, returns from his American exile to fight against the Eagle of France instead of under him. With a flash of his old-time genius for rapidity of movement and unerring discernment of his foes' tactical blunders, Napoleon wins the last of his great victories, Dresden; but the results are

barren, for while he is winning this one battle, his generals lose five: Oudinot at Grossbeeren, Girard at Hagelberg, Macdonald at Katzbach, Vandamme at Kulm, Ney at Dennewitz. The catastrophic disaster of Leipzig follows on October 15, 1813—exactly a year after the retreat from Moscow began,—and thirty French generals with 33,000 men are left in the enemy's hands. The Emperor's remaining 150,000 Frenchmen, war-worn and half-famished, are nearly surrounded by 300,000 ably led Prussians, Austrians, Russians, Swedes, and British. By the close of the year he has lost 400,000 men. At last the greatest of soldiers has been out-generaled! He acknowledges that he has made errors, but neither falters nor loses hope. "I went too far. I have made mistakes. Fortune has turned her back on me these last two years; but she's a woman, and will change. Who can tell?" For another three months he struggles on, writhing like Laocoön in the strangling coils of the sea serpents, but undaunted, still believing in his star.

From the north and the east the Allied armies sweep across the frontiers of France itself. Schwarzenberg, violating Swiss neutrality, pours 150,000 men into Lorraine by way of Basel and Belfort. Confronting him are only 50,000 weary, disheartened troops under four Marshals of France. In Paris, Sunday, January 23, Napoleon holds his last reception in the great hall of the Tuileries. He appoints Marie Louise Empress-Regent, and makes King Joseph Lieutenant-General of

France. Then he turns viciously on Blücher and defeats him at Brienne, in Champagne, where, as a cadet in the military school, Napoleon had absorbedly studied the *Gallic Wars* of Cæsar. He scornfully rejects a peace offered by the Allied governments; it makes the condition, shameful and dishonorable in his eyes, that France return to her boundaries of 1791. The General of the Army of Italy awakens in him. With less than 30,000 men he scatters to the four winds Blücher's 50,000 who are marching on Paris, and checks Schwarzenberg who is advancing thither from Troyes. But Wellington captures Bordeaux, and everywhere the Emperor's Marshals fail him, or go over to the Royalists. The Allied troops reach the capital. The Empress-Regent leaves with the King of Rome; King Joseph, Louis, and Jérôme follow. Paris capitulates; Blücher plants twenty cannon on the heights of Montmartre. The Czar and the King of Prussia ride in at the head of their Guards, and the white cockade of the Bourbons replaces the tricolor in the caps of thousands of the fickle Parisian populace. The Allied sovereigns dictate their orders, and a farcical Provisional Government, guided by the vengeful Talleyrand, declares on April 2 that Napoleon has ceased to reign. Abdication. Elba.

For twenty-one days a lonely figure sat in the Palace of Fontainebleau. Within a few miles of him passed, on their way from Paris, his mother, her brother whom he had made a Cardinal, two of his own brothers whom he had made Kings, and their wives. Not one turned

aside to bid farewell to the man to whom all owed everything. To avoid him, they took to broken-up roads in whose mud their carriage wheels sank to the axles; rather than spend a night in the palace, they slept in evil-smelling, dilapidated roadside inns. In Napoleon's Gethsemane agony, family, Marshals of the Empire, Ministers of State, courtiers—all whom he had raised to wealth and great estate—passed by on the other side. When his tired eyes looked up they rested on only a few humble servitors and some grizzled warriors of the Old Guard.

Accompanied by the four Allied Commissioners who were to see him safely to Elba, and a mounted escort of Guards to protect him from the turbulent mobs in Provence, the Emperor left Fontainebleau on April 20, 1814. At Aix he had a choice of three routes to the port where he was to embark for his Lilliputian Kingdom. He chose the one that ran through Luc, where he knew he would find his sister Pauline.

Nice was cut off from communication with Paris early in March; letters, newspapers, visitors ceased to arrive. Although uneasy and anxious as to what was happening to the Emperor, Pauline still had her health to consider and so left Nice towards the middle of March intending to go to Gréoux, whose waters had proved so beneficial to her the year before. On the way there, she stopped at Bouillidou, near Luc, where M. Charles, a member of the *Corps législatif*, had placed his house at her service. Bonaparte had once stayed there for a

night on his return from Egypt. At Luc, she learned of the Emperor's fall, and received a letter from Bacciochi, Elisa's husband, then in Marseilles, proposing that she should accompany him to Rome. As always in the face of a real crisis, the Princess Pauline never flinched. All thoughts of self vanished. She answered Bacciochi, April 21:

"The Emperor will shortly pass through here. I wish to see him and offer my sympathy. If he will permit me to follow him, I will never leave him. If he refuses, I will then go to Naples. But I have not loved the Emperor because he was a Sovereign; I have loved him because he was my brother, and I will remain faithful to him until death."

Learning that several Cardinals were at Luc on their way to Italy she extended them an invitation to visit her. One of them, Cardinal Pacca, whom Napoleon had kept in prison from 1809 to 1812, accepted and afterwards put down some notes of his very brief call.

"I found the Princess worn and emaciated, a death-like pallor in her face. Had not one of the ladies-in-waiting pointed her out to me, I should never have recognized her as the Pauline Bonaparte whose beauty and charm the French journals had praised so extravagantly. Of the terrible catastrophe that had befallen her brother she spoke with grief but calmly. She said she hoped to be in Italy very soon, going there on a frigate that would meet her at Nice. Being informed that I expected to be in Rome within a few days, she

said that I should find her mother and uncle there and begged me to give them the latest news of her."

The Cardinal's visit of courtesy, for some strange reason, deeply affected Pauline. She referred to it constantly, manifested an almost fulsome gratitude, and spoke of it as though he had performed an heroic act. In her will, she bequeathed to the Cardinal a clock and two candelabra which he was to choose from her villa in Rome.

The Emperor arrived at Bouillidou between three and four o'clock on the afternoon of April 26. He was wearing the foreign uniform he had been obliged to put on to conceal his identity after the violent hostility shown towards him by the mobs in Avignon and Orgon. Pauline threw herself into his arms, her tears falling on his face and hands. Brother and sister retired to a private room and talked together until eight o'clock in the evening. Pauline announced her determination to follow him into exile and begged to be allowed to accompany him on the ship which was to take him to Elba. After all the betrayals, treasons, and desertions of which for months past he had been victim and witness, this irrefragable evidence of sincere affection and genuine devotion was soothing balm to the Emperor's tortured mind and bruised spirit. Again, this frivolous sister and capricious beauty had been the first and only one of his family to offer sympathy and service in an hour of agonized need. He could not and did not refuse this assurance of having near him, in his

approaching exile, the presence of one loyal and loving heart. Napoleon promised Pauline to arrange for her to join him.

When this long and moving interview was over, the Allied Commissioners were presented to the Princess, and she at once placed the house at the disposal of Napoleon and his suite. Late that same night she went on to Muy, fifteen miles nearer Fréjus from which the embarkation for Elba was to take place. But the emotional upheaval through which she had just passed proved too much for her frail body and fragile strength; her plan to go with the Emperor had to be given up. Napoleon wrote to Colonel Campbell, the English Commissioner: "Princess Pauline, sister of the Emperor, desires to go to the Island of Elba, but owing to illness cannot leave Fréjus for five or six days. His Majesty requests that an English frigate be instructed to receive and conduct her to the Island." At eight o'clock in the evening of April 28, Napoleon embarked on the English ship of war *Undaunted*, being received with military honors and a salute of twenty-one guns.

Pauline turned back to Luc to gather strength for her voyage. There she was joined by Colonel Duchand, now a Baron, who stayed with her until May 15. His devotion brought her needed comfort; she unburdened her soul to him, pouring out her griefs and troubles and making him the confidant of her future plans. When he left, he bore a letter from Pauline to her business agents in Paris informing them that Colonel

Duchand would tell them verbally what her desires were regarding her effects and finances. "Listen to him as though he were myself," she wrote. "He holds my power of attorney and will present it whenever required; he is my only friend. As soon as my affairs are put in good order, he will rejoin me." The Princess further instructed them to deliver to him the richly-ornamented dressing-case once presented to Forbin but afterwards reclaimed and the engraved monogram changed to "A. D." i.e., Auguste Duchand.

Refreshed in mind and body by her lover's visit Pauline now felt able to proceed on her journey, but found difficulty in deciding which ship to choose from three which were at her disposal. Captain Ussher had returned for her in the *Undaunted* by request of the Emperor; Murat had sent the frigate *Laetitia* from Naples; and Captain Tower, commanding the English ship *Curaçao* at Nice, pressed the offer of his services upon her. An ardent admirer of Napoleon, whom he always referred to as "the great man," the gallant Tower had openly fallen a victim to the charms of the Princess. She finally chose the *Laetitia* which put out to sea from Saint-Raphaël on May 19. No one knows exactly why she elected to take passage in the Neapolitan frigate, in view of the more than strained relations then existing between Napoleon and Murat, who, in January, had deserted the Emperor and made an alliance with Austria. Repenting of his pusillanimous action, Murat returned to his former allegiance, but

the Emperor never forgave this base desertion of him at a moment when his fortunes were in so critical a state.

The *Laetitia* ran into ugly weather and extremely rough seas. Pauline became frightfully ill and suffered so intensely it was necessary to put her ashore at Villefranche. Captain Tower rushed posthaste from Nice to offer his services and a better boat. The Princess again declined, but entrusted him with a letter to her brother. His disappointment was keen, for he had made elaborate preparations for her comfort and entertainment on the *Curaçao*. At Villefranche, she learned that the Allied officers had drunk all the wine in her cellars at Neuilly and Paris, at the same time complaining bitterly because there was not more of it. With clearing skies and a calmer sea, Pauline set sail again on May 30, and the *Laetitia* arrived on June 1 in the harbor of Porto Ferrajo at Elba at two o'clock in the afternoon. The *Curaçao* had anchored there at half-past eight in the morning. The Emperor's sister was received like a Princess of a firmly established dynasty. A salute of twenty-one guns roared from the shore, answered round for round by the guns of the frigate; Captain Tower, with the commanders of the *Dryade* and *l'Inconstant*, immediately came aboard to present their respects; and Pauline, gay and affable, received them while reclining in her favorite attitude in an artistically arranged hammock. On account of her weakened condition and desire to proceed at once to Naples, she had not intended to land; but when the Emperor arrived late in the after-

noon she yielded to his urgent request that she spend at least one night ashore. Saluted by the crews of all the warships in the harbor, and pressed so closely by the welcoming crowds that their carriage was several times halted, Napoleon and Pauline drove to the house, still largely unfurnished, where the Emperor had taken up his residence. Exhausted by the effort and excitement incident to her welcome, Pauline retired immediately after dinner, the Emperor giving up his own rooms to her, as she had done to him the night of his arrival at Bouillidou. The next day she executed one of the many plans that had been maturing in her busy head. From one of her splendid diamond necklaces she detached a number of the finest stones. These she turned over to General Bertrand, the Emperor's Grand Marshal, with instructions to purchase a piece of land and house where she could be positively assured of rest and quiet upon her return to Elba. She left at seven o'clock that evening for Naples, the Emperor accompanying her to the boat that took her off to the *Laetitia.* Pauline kissed his hand, embraced him, and said farewell again with streaming eyes.

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§ VII

Arrival at Naples—State of Her Fortunes—Sale of Hôtel Charost—Borghese Demands the Return of His Pictures and Silver—Homesickness—Departure for Elba, October 29, 1814

MURAT and Caroline accorded the Princess a friendly welcome at Naples. With their aid she was soon comfortably settled in apartments that gave her the quiet, the fresh air and sunshine, and opportunity for recuperation of which she stood in need. Her original intention had been to pass the entire season at the hot springs of Ischia, but her mind was diverted from this by matters arising out of a protracted and voluminous correspondence she at once began with her business representatives and those in charge of her residences at Paris and Neuilly. Chief of her anxieties was the state of her fortune and property, both immediate and future. For the first time in twenty years Pauline was compelled to take serious thought for the morrow. However entangled her affairs, however heavy her debts, she had hitherto always known that Napoleon was in the background and would, if necessary, extricate her from any real difficulties. That

assurance was now by no means absolute. The fall of the Emperor had shocked her profoundly; all the foundations of the world to which she was accustomed trembled under it. Uncertainty, doubt, and a panic fear of poverty obsessed her. Under the Treaty signed at Fontainebleau by Napoleon, Pauline was entitled to an annual income of 300,000 francs from the Bourbon Government, but no installment of this had yet been paid, and already disquieting rumors were abroad that the properties of all the Bonapartes were to be confiscated. The 200,000 francs ready money recently procured through the sale of some of her diamonds was fast melting away. "Within two months I shall have absolutely nothing," she wrote on July 11. It was a heartbreaking prospect for the Empire's loveliest and most frivolous butterfly, so habituated to the sunshine of assured wealth. Had she, also, from her talks with the Emperor at Luc and Elba, any hint that he did not intend to remain in exile? Had she been the bearer of secret messages from Napoleon pardoning Murat for his past treason and betrayal and warning the King of Naples to hold himself in readiness for an attempt on the part of the Emperor to regain his lost throne and Empire? Both these suggestions have been strongly asserted and argued, but positive proof of them is lacking.

A further disquieting fact was that for weeks no direct word had reached Pauline from Duchand to whom she had entrusted important letters and messages to her Paris representatives. He was, too, for the mo-

ment, the only person outside her family for whom she felt any tenderness, or whose presence she desired near her. Some misunderstanding had occurred at Paris, for at length she wrote impatiently to her agent Michelot: "You have not said a word in your letters regarding Baron Duchand, although I have sent you several letters that I have expressly requested you to deliver to him. You know perfectly well he is a man in whom I have absolute confidence, a confidence he deserves because of his proved and unlimited devotion to me—and yet you ask if you can trust him with my money!"

Pauline's urgent need of money and her justifiable fears lest her estates in France be confiscated, brought her to a quick decision to sell Neuilly and the palace in the Rue Saint-Honoré, and negotiations to this end lasted all through the summer. Money was scarce in Paris and as Pauline had set a price of 900,000 francs on each of her residences, buyers were slow in presenting themselves. Uncertainty as to whether the title of the Bonapartes to their property would be recognized was a further difficulty. By a stroke of good fortune, the Duke of Wellington, who had been appointed Ambassador Extraordinary to the Court of Louis XVIII, was greatly attracted by the Hôtel Charost. After protracted delays and bargainings the British Government purchased it for 800,000 francs, and on October 24, 1814, the Nest of Pauline in the Rue Saint-Honoré became the official residence of the English Ambassador. No purchaser could be found for Neuilly, and in

December all the estates and properties in France belonging to the late Imperial family were confiscated by the State, so Neuilly passed out of Pauline's control.

In the midst of all these anxieties and transactions the Princess busied herself with preparations for furnishing the house in Elba that she expected to occupy there. Everything necessary for it must come from her Paris house; a new stream of letters particularized, minutely and interminably, the long catalogue of things desired. Included among them were her green carriage, white carriage, dressing-table, two pairs of candelabra, various clocks, carpets, servants' liveries (if still in good condition), a billiard table, folding step-ladder, West Indian liqueurs, the rum especially, six favorite beds with all their curtains and hangings, the tapestries from the rose room, and a walnut *chaise de nuit*. If cartage by land was too expensive, all was to go by water to Marseilles, but the essential thing was promptness. Pauline's instructions were, as always, detailed, positive, and frequently contradictory. Feverish activity reigned among her people in the Rue Saint-Honoré. A first shipment of sixty huge packing cases was soon on its way to Marseilles, and a second lot, likewise sixty in number, quickly followed. Captain Tower, still deeply enamored, was to take them on his ship to Leghorn, whence they were to be reshipped to Elba.

Of Borghese, the Princess heard nothing during the winter and spring. From the date of the Emperor's abdication the Prince had pointedly sought to dissociate

himself from all connections with the Bonapartes and to ingratiate himself with the Powers that had overthrown them. From Naples, Pauline wrote to Lucien in Rome asking for news of her husband. Naïvely, or with some vague idea that her relationship to Borghese might, in an emergency, possess some value or advantage, she said: "It is my desire to be on good terms with him if he is willing to reciprocate." This hint of a softer or more diplomatic mood towards her much-tried husband was of short duration, for she soon had news that revived the old harshness and animosity. Word came from Paris that the Prince had instructed his agent there to demand the return of all his personal property in their residences at Neuilly and in the Rue Saint-Honoré including a choice collection of one hundred and seventy-five pictures and a large amount of fine silverware. Pauline's anger flared up at the demand and she violently opposed it. Writing to Madame Mère on June 15, she said: "You see, my dear mamma, that it is quite impossible for us to be reconciled after such conduct on his part." She ordered her *intendant* to prevent the removal of the properties claimed by Borghese and a long drawn out battle ensued between their respective representatives. The Princess complains bitterly in her letters that she can come to no arrangement or understanding with the Prince, but it is nowhere clear just what it was she wanted of him. "You know," she wrote on July 16, "I can come to no agreement with him. I have never been able to live with him, and at this

moment he is acting vilely towards me. Not a word or a line has come from him since the beginning of our misfortunes." In September, when there seemed to be a prospect of selling Neuilly, the Prince, at Lucien's request, consented to waive his power of attorney so that the sale might be made, but only on condition that the proceeds be deposited with a notary until his rights had been determined and settled. Pauline had no intention of yielding anything. To forestall Borghese in any legal moves he might make, her ingenious and impish mind devised a measure filled with the elements of comedy. She forbade her agent to give up any of the Prince's pictures, no matter who came for them or whatever orders were given him. But, she continued, "since he may be able to discover a means of forcing you to surrender them, I authorize you to remove from their frames twenty-five of his finest canvases and conceal them in an absolutely safe place. Then if you are called upon to produce them, you can say that in accordance with the order that I enclose herewith, you have sent them to me. By doing this, I shall make the Prince believe that I actually have them, and this will be the best way to bring him to terms, for thus far he has rejected every effort of mine to come to an amicable arrangement of our affairs. . . . As to his silver, find a way of sending it to me as speedily as possible, either by the stage-coach or by wagon as far as Marseilles, and from there by sea to Leghorn." The Prince had still to learn the futility of trying to defeat or circumvent a

woman whose mind is set on achieving her purpose. From Florence he wrote urgent letters to Cardinals Consalvi and Pacca and the Pope, asking permission to come to Rome, undoubtedly to induce them to bring pressure on the intractable Pauline. None of them answered him. He then went to Rome, where he found King Charles IV of Spain installed in the Borghese Palace with no immediate intention of leaving. Pope Pius declined to intervene in the private concerns of the Prince, and the Roman official world gave him but an indifferent reception. The unhappy head of the house of Borghese returned to his Florentine palace and resumed active litigious warfare against the Princess.

Depressed by illness, beset by money difficulties, irritated by Borghese's proceedings, worried by Duchand's failure or inability to join her, a wave of nostalgia swept over Pauline. She felt a longing for the presence of her mother, for the comfort and strength always to be found in the calm, assured, understanding spirit of that Corsican matron the roots of whose character neither Imperial splendor nor bitter adversity could affect. Madame Mère, Lucien, and Uncle Fesch were all in Rome. With all three, Pauline's relations were always affectionate and sympathetic—which means none of them ever seriously opposed her. In Rome, too, was the kindly Pope; if Napoleon's ultimate designs—whatever they might be—should fail, Pius VII would surely afford her safety and protection. It was in this mood that she wrote Lucien: "I beg you, dear brother,

to present my humble duty to His Holiness. Tell him I count much on his kindness, and that I hope he will regard me as one of the most faithful of his flock." To her mother she wrote: "I have suffered so much I need to be with you, my dear mamma. Write me when you plan to join the Emperor in the Island of Elba. He desires it very much and has charged me to tell you so. I hope Joseph will go as he has written he will do. It will be most unkind of him if he does not, because the Emperor ought not to be left entirely alone. We ought especially to show him our attachment now misfortune has overtaken him. At least that is the way I feel."

The state of Pauline's health did not permit her to go to Rome, and the projected visit to Ischia had to be abandoned because the physicians pronounced the waters there too strong for her in her weakened condition. As for their further counsels and prescriptions, she took what pleased her and rejected the others. She was led to accept one through her inborn love of novelty. Dr. Andral, court physician, had satisfied himself that the ailments peculiar to women were due to their not wearing pantalettes, and prescribed this style of underwear for all his patients. Queen Caroline having been one of the first to obey the doctor, the wearing of gay and attractive pantalettes became the fashion. Pauline seized on the fad with enthusiasm and ordered from Paris a full equipment of these indispensable aids to health. "They are absolutely essential, for the physicians have ordered me to wear them." Caroline, in a moment of

inspired clarity, admirably described the only attitude it was possible for the family to take towards Pauline, who would listen to no counsels (if she did not like them) from husband, relations, friends, or devoted servants: "What can one do? Just love her, and let her do as she pleases, without opposing her or tormenting her with useless advice, since she has made up her mind not to follow it."

Meantime, on Elba, Napoleon awaited with ill-concealed impatience the long expected arrival of his favorite sister. Delay and indecision were abhorrent to him; he could admit no reason or see any excuse for them. One of his own most characteristic traits was the rapidity with which he passed from decision to action. Pauline, on the contrary, in everything except vital emergencies, was an habitual procrastinator. Originally, July had been set as the time of her departure from Naples, but her ill-health, business affairs, and half-formed plan of visiting Rome caused its postponement. In August Madame Mère passed over to the Island and Pauline promised to follow quickly. The Emperor sat counting the days in eager anticipation only to receive word at the end of the month that she would be unable to start until about September 25. Napoleon replied that a ship would be waiting for her on that date at Cività Vecchia. In obedience to the Emperor's instructions, Commander Taillade arrived in *l'Inconstant* on September 25, bringing with him Madame Blachier, one of the ladies-in-waiting of Madame Mère, to attend

the Princess during the passage to Elba. Still Pauline was not ready to depart, and for a whole month the vessel swung idly at anchor in the harbor of Baja, all the world awaiting the good pleasure of this dilatory lady. Commander Taillade employed the long delay in paying violent court to Madame Blachier who, it is said, had the greatest difficulty in preserving her virtue, so brusque and ardent was the wooing of the inflamed sailor. Pauline at last came on board on October 29, still hesitant and dreading a repetition of the terrible seasickness she had suffered in the previous May. Two days later, the watchful British Commissioner at Elba, Sir Neil Campbell, noted down in his *Journal*:

"Napoleon's sister Pauline arrived here today on board of his corvette, escorted as far as the channel of Piombino by a Neapolitan frigate, which then returned to Naples without any communication with Elba."

* * *

BOOK FIVE

§ I

Pauline at Elba—Her Devotion to the Emperor—Organizes Social Life of the Island

AT ELBA, the Princess made full compensation for her long delay in arriving by giving the Emperor four months of as selfless devotion as it is possible for one human being to give another. During this brief period, the last they were destined to spend together, the rooted affection and understanding uniting this strange brother and sister came to a full and perfect flowering. He gave her his complete trust and confidence in a way he had rarely done before to anyone. The selfish ambitions of his other sisters had often angered and disgusted him; he had no illusions regarding the quality of their affection for him or faithfulness to his interests. Paulette, it was true, had provoked him by her madcap pranks and indiscreet liaisons, but no serious consequences had ever followed them, and she had never at any time been involved in political intrigues or other associations inimical to his policies. So, now, her sympathetic and charming presence soothed his overwrought nerves, and making her the confidante of the thoughts seething in his active mind released

the strain of his incessant mental concentration. Pauline, on her side, exerted herself to the utmost to bring color and brightness into Napoleon's humiliating exile. She subordinated herself wholly to his wishes, moods, and whims, and forgot herself, her maladies, her self-indulgence, and future fortunes in a sustained, tireless effort to serve her hero. The irresponsible Goddess of Caprice had given place to the loving, devoted sister of a great man overwhelmed by Fate.

To provide himself with a suitable residence, Napoleon had cleared away some sheds and windmills on the slope of the hill on which the citadel was situated, remodeled two houses formerly occupied by engineer and artillery officers, and united them with a central building. The new structure became the Mulini Palace, as the Elbans called it from the windmills that had previously stood there. It made no pretensions to beauty or splendor, but it was clean and airy, with large and spacious rooms. The furniture in it had been secured by methods not lacking an element of humor. Napoleon had brought no furniture to Elba with him and the island contained little or nothing that met with his approval. But just across the water, on the Italian mainland, was the Principality of Piombino which he had given his sister Élisa in 1805. It had now been annexed by Austria, but the Emperor had no scruples about sending over a ship and stripping Élisa's former palace of all its contents, even to the Venetian blinds and parquet flooring. A propitious storm added a further

windfall of equipment at the expense of Prince Borghese. The Allies having ousted him from his post of Governor-General at Turin, the Prince sent his furniture by sea to Rome. Caught in a furious gale, the ship carrying it was forced to take shelter off Elba. Napoleon promptly took possession of the Prince's furniture, saying, "It must not go out of the family."

The house originally bought for Pauline in anticipation of her early arrival had been taken over by Napoleon and assigned to Madame Mère. The Emperor installed his sister in the suite of six handsomely furnished rooms on the first floor of the Mulini which had been especially prepared for Marie Louise. The new arrangement was more convenient and preferable because it was to Pauline that he entrusted the task of organizing the social side of his household and creating the semblance of a real court. She took up her duties enthusiastically and was soon the idol of all the Elbans. Her beauty, merriment, and indefatigable energy in arranging receptions, dances, dinners, theatricals and other forms of amusement in which she was adept, more than consoled the islanders for the absence of Marie Louise, who was already taking the first steps that ended in her becoming the mistress of the Austrian General, Count Neipperg, despite the black bandage that concealed his loss of an eye. Under Pauline's directing hand a diminutive "society" formed itself with the Mulini Palace as its center, made up of the principal officers of the Emperor's establishment and their

wives, the ladies attendant upon Madame Mère and the Princess, and the leading families of Porto Ferrajo. A large hall on the ground floor of the palace was transformed into a theater and two comedies played, *Les Fausses Infidélités* and *Les Folies Amoureuses.* Pauline directed the rehearsals, designed the costumes, took a part herself, and selected the actors from willing officers and subalterns, and the actresses from the ladies-in-waiting. At a fancy dress ball that lasted until seven in the morning, the Princess appeared first as a Neapolitan and later as a shepherdess from the Isle of Procida. Dances at the Mulini enlivened evenings that would otherwise have been of a somber cast. One of Pauline's ladies, Madame Stupilski, wife of a Polish officer, danced the fandango ravishingly—she was a Spaniard by birth. She was not exceptionally beautiful, but radiated an inexpressible charm, and her dancing captivated everyone. Pauline, who loved dancing, participated actively in the gaiety of these occasions, quite forgetting her invalidism. One of her most frequent partners was the heroic but stout General Cambronne, Commander of the Guards detachment at Elba. At the end of a dance he would be found mopping a dripping brow, and quivering with the thrills induced by such close proximity to the lovely person of the Princess. But, "like all nervous natures, she swung from one extreme to the other, . . . one day carried to her chair, the next afoot, and exhausting herself with pleasure till she collapsed."

With exemplary good nature and patience the Princess accommodated herself to the exacting and often exasperating demands and whims of her brother whose nerves became more and more on edge under the surveillance of the British and other spies on Elba and the slow progress of his plans for escaping and regaining his throne. One of Pauline's own waiting-women was paid by the Prefecture of Police in Paris for information that could be used against the Emperor. In the absence of facts, these spies sent back to their chiefs fictions of their own invention, absurdly false or unspeakably vile, which were immediately printed and circulated by Royalist newspapers and pamphleteers. It was from a source such as this that the charge of incestuous relations between Napoleon and his sister derived. All her tact and diplomacy were required to save from his wrath those who unwittingly offended him, and she showed marvelous self-control in submitting to his harsh reproof of herself when some action of hers displeased him. He forbade her to wear her fine diamonds and jewelry, to spare the feelings of the Elban ladies whose ornaments would be outshone. At his public receptions, when the Princess passed before his chair, she was expected to make the same deep obeisance as when he sat on the Imperial throne in the Tuileries. Knowing his superstitious horror of black she took the precaution to adorn a favorite black velvet gown with flounces of pink, a color she knew he liked. When she appeared in it one evening, he exclaimed, "What is

this, Madame? Are you coming to dine *en domino*?" and publicly ordered her to leave the room and change. On another occasion she came in wearing a lovely white embroidered gown just received from Paris, and he burst out, "Ah! And now you have dressed yourself *à la victime*!" Again she was commanded to withdraw and put on a different dress, and she obeyed meekly. The robes *à la victime* and coiffure of the same name were an invention of Talma's hairdresser, Duplan. The gown fell in straight folds, and the hair was drawn tightly up from the nape of the neck, thus giving a sharp resemblance to the costume of the victims of the guillotine. Napoleon disliked the allusion intensely. Pauline put up eight new blinds in the drawing room, providing the linen herself. Marshal Bertrand presented to the Emperor in due course the bill for the making-up and hanging, amounting to 6 francs 50 centimes. The Emperor's disapproval was prompt and explicit. "Not having ordered this expense, which has not been carried to the budget, the Princess must pay it. It will be the same with all expenses of this kind made before they have been approved." Pauline took no offense, but continued to help him covertly with money received from the sale of her jewels. "If he wanted to beat me," she would say, "I should resign myself with a good grace. It would be painful, of course, but I should bear it, if it gave him pleasure."

* * *

§ II

Napoleon Resolves to Leave Elba—His Reasons—Colonel Campbell Leaves the Island—The Emperor's Preparations—Takes Leave of His Mother and Pauline—Embarcation, February 26, 1815

TOWARDS the middle of February, 1815, Napoleon formed the definite resolve to challenge Fate and endeavor to regain something of his lost position and Empire. The troubled and uncertain political situation throughout Europe offered many favoring circumstances and gave him confidence that such an effort on his part would be welcomed in many quarters and supported with sufficient strength to make it successful. The Congress of Vienna was drawing up a new map of Europe with little regard for the feelings of the peoples whom they were transferring from one sovereignty to another. The Belgians objected vigorously to being handed over to the Dutch, and Italian popular indignation was roused to fever heat at the prospect of the hated Hapsburgs again settling down in Venice and Milan, Modena, Parma, and Florence. The spirit of nationalism, which had been quickened into life under Napoleon, seemed everywhere threatened by the auto-

crats in charge of the Congress. The Emperor also knew that behind the scenes at Vienna the Allied sovereigns and their representatives were engaged in acrid disputes amongst themselves, and that fear of him was one of their chief concerns. The newspapers openly printed rumors that the Congress was debating the advisability of removing him from Elba to St. Helena or some other spot remote from Europe. Word constantly came from trusted agents in France that his old soldiers and the men of the Revolution were ready to flock to his standard again. Then, too, he had a most substantial personal grievance which, in his own eyes, justified escape from Elba. While he had scrupulously observed his part of the Treaty with the Allies signed at Fontainebleau, April 11, 1814, the Bourbon Government of France had flagrantly disregarded every obligation entered into towards him. They had paid not a centime of the 2,000,000 francs a year solemnly pledged to him; they had seized the gold which represented his personal savings from the sums granted him as Emperor; they had confiscated all the property in France belonging to him and the members of his family; they had supported, if not actually subsidized, malignant Royalist plots to kidnap or assassinate him. England and Russia, co-signers with France of the Treaty, had made a few feeble but ineffective efforts to compel Louis XVIII to fulfill their common obligations.

Having reached the decision to burst his irksome

bonds, the Emperor began immediate but cautious preparations for departure. No explanation of his plans was given to anyone, although their purport was soon guessed by his faithful companions in arms, Generals Bertrand and Drouot, and by the veterans of the Guard, who, profoundly bored by the monotony of life on the island, had for weeks been asking him in their familiar way, "Sire, when shall we set out for France?"

A piece of rare good fortune favored Napoleon's designs. Colonel Neil Campbell, the British Commissioner, left Elba on February 16 for a brief visit to Italy for medical advice. A French writer says it was the attractions of a lady that drew the dour Highlander to the Continent, but the character of the man makes such a charge incredible, and all the known facts controvert it. For some time, Campbell had been extremely uneasy regarding Napoleon, owing partly to the Emperor's reserved attitude towards him, and partly to the recent visits of "mysterious adventurers and disaffected characters" from France and Italy. He therefore requested Captain Adye, commander of the British warship that took him over to the mainland, to cruise around Elba during his absence and keep close watch on events there, a request that the Captain faithfully carried out. The Captain was also instructed to call for Campbell at Leghorn on February 26, to take him back to Elba. At Florence, where he went to consult a doctor about his increasing deafness, Colonel Campbell met a Mr. Cooke, one of His British Majesty's Under-

Secretaries of State who had just come from Vienna. "When I told him," says Campbell, "that of course Napoleon would ask me many questions as to the Congress on my return, and that I should be glad if he could give me any information which might be particularly interesting with regard to his money, Marie Louise, etc., he very sarcastically replied, 'You may tell him that everything is amicably settled at Vienna; that the Allied Sovereigns will not quarrel; that he has no chance. *He is quite forgotten—as much as if he had never existed. Nobody thinks of him at all.*'"

On the same day that the British Commissioner left the island Napoleon launched his first orders. Pons de l'Hérault, one of his minor civilian officials at Rio Marina on the other side of Elba, was instructed to charter two transport ships, "brigs or xebecs to be over 90 tons, the largest possible," and bring them to Porto Ferrajo, one with a cargo of timber, the other with all available ammunition from the citadel of Porto Longone. To General Drouot he wrote: "Give orders for the brig to be careened, overhaul her copper, stop the leaks, see to the caulking, and do whatever is required to make her seaworthy. See that she is fully munitioned; victual her with biscuit, rice, vegetables, cheese, half supplies of wine, and half of brandy, water for 120 men for three months, salt meat for fifteen days. For the sake of economy the wine can be taken from my cellar. See to all these details and let her be ready to sail by the 24th or 25th of this month." On an after-

noon when Pauline and her mother were out on the water in a gondola, a complete uniform and two pairs of shoes were issued to each soldier. Peyrusse, Treasurer of the Household, was ordered to pack up the 1,863,500 francs remaining in the Emperor's coffers. "Get hold of some trunks. Put the gold in, and some of the books from my library on the top. Send all your people away; do the packing yourself. I need hardly tell you all this is confidential." The brig *l'Inconstant* and the xebec *l'Étoile*, the two largest of the Emperor's little fleet of five small vessels, were loaded up with cases of cartridges, bales of stores, and provisions. Not a precaution nor a necessary article escaped the mind of this master of detail.

At midnight on Thursday, February 23, Captain Adye, in H.M.S. *Partridge*, quietly anchored in the harbor of Porto Ferrajo. He landed early the next morning but not before Napoleon had issued orders to suspend all suspicious movements of men and materials. The English commander called on General Bertrand and learned that Napoleon was still on the island. In the course of their conversation, the experienced old soldier, who had followed the Emperor from the days of the Egyptian campaign, casually inquired the probable date of Campbell's return, and the honest sailor told him without hesitation. After leaving Bertrand, Captain Adye strolled about the town where he found everything sleepy and normal, and watched the soldiers of the Imperial Guard engaged in

the dull and peaceful task of carrying earth and planting trees in front of their barracks. At two in the afternoon he sailed away again quite satisfied, as he afterwards reported to Campbell, that all was quiet on Elba. At sunset he could still see the topmasts of *l'Inconstant* within the harbor. As soon as the watchers in the fort, following him through their telescopes, reported the Captain well out on the open sea, the Emperor resumed the embarkation of artillery, shells, and stores. On Saturday, the twenty-fifth, an embargo was put on the island. Camping utensils were assembled, and the soldiers' pouches replenished with cartridges; the Corsican Battalion was drilled and sent to its barracks, to prevent any possibility of desertion. Commander Mallet kept a sharp lookout at Fort Falcone to give instant warning if the English sloop of war should return. Napoleon, desiring to avoid inconvenient questions, feigned indisposition and did not appear at all during the day.

At dinner that evening he seemed in unusually good spirits and afterwards sat down to a game of cards with his mother and Pauline. At length, he broke off playing and abruptly walked out into the gardens, and the crackle of the gravel under his feet could be heard in the room as he paced restlessly up and down. From the sky a brilliant moon flooded land and sea with silver radiance. Moved by a sudden impulse, Madame Mère rose and followed him. He stopped and leaned against a fig tree as his mother came up and inquired anxiously

if anything had particularly disturbed him. After a few instants of silent hesitation, he replied:

"Yes, my mother, you have a right to know, but I forbid you to repeat my words to anyone whomsoever, not even to Pauline. I am leaving tomorrow night."

"And where are you going?"

"To Paris. I cannot die on this island and terminate my career in a repose unworthy of me. Besides, want of money would soon leave me here alone, exposed to the attacks of my many enemies. France is excited. The Bourbons have roused against them all the convictions and interests connected with the Revolution. The army wishes for me. Everything inclines me to hope that the moment I appear the soldiers will hasten to meet me. I certainly may meet some unexpected obstacle in my path. I may meet an officer who, faithful to the Bourbons, would restrain the impetuosity of the troops; and then a few hours would end my career. Such an end were better than a long residence in this isle with the future that awaits me here. I will leave and tempt fortune once more. What is your advice, mother?"

Before the eyes of Letitia Bonaparte, mother of the indomitable man standing before her in the moonlight, there flashed a black vision of him dying as a common malefactor on the shores of France. A momentary shiver of fear ran through her.

"Let me," she said, "be a mother for a moment, and I will then give you my opinion."

Silently this heroic mother fought her agonizing battle. At last, in a firm tone, she gave her answer.

"Go, my son, and fulfill your destiny. You will fail, perhaps, and your failure will be followed by your death. Yet, if you must die, I trust that God, who would not sanction this in a repose unworthy of you, will not suffer it to be by poison, but with your sword in your hand. I see with sorrow that you cannot remain here, but let us hope that He who has protected you amid so many battles, will save you once more."

So deeply moved that further utterance was impossible, mother and son embraced and returned to the house, he to spend the night drafting the proclamations to be issued on his arrival in France, she to pass it on her knees praying for his safety and success.

On Sunday morning, February 26, the Emperor held his customary reception, to which all the civil and military authorities had been especially invited. Only the slightest sign of fatigue betrayed the effects of his all-night vigil. Very briefly and without preamble he announced that his departure was fixed for that evening, but gave no hint of his destination. The news came like the traditional thunderbolt on those present, but before any questions could be asked Napoleon withdrew to his private apartments. Mass was said as usual at nine o'clock. The Grenadiers working in the officers' garden were ordered to continue their task until three in the afternoon. There was still a chance that, in spite of the rigid embargo on all incoming and outgoing ves-

sels, some English or French sloop of war might put into the harbor with inquiring or inconvenient visitors. At four o'clock soup was served to the troops, and an hour later the drums beat to arms. The embarkation of the Emperor's 1,050 officers and men began.

Before leaving for their posts on shipboard the Emperor's principal officers were received in farewell audience at the Mulini Palace by Pauline and her mother. Madame Mère bore herself bravely through the ordeal, but afterwards was forced to give way to tears. To Marchand, the personal valet of Napoleon, she handed a sweetmeat-box with her portrait on it. "Take this," she said, "and let it replace the one he has now. I entrust my son to your keeping. If misfortune befalls him, do not abandon him." Her further words were indistinguishable because of the sobs that choked her utterance.

Pauline broke down completely in the presence of Napoleon's faithful companions. With tears streaming from her eyes, she could only say: "Adieu, my friends. My prayers will follow you. Love my brother always; guard him carefully, and send me news of your progress." Still sobbing, she embraced those who had been members of her private circle and whom she knew were utterly devoted to the Emperor. After the audience she went to Napoleon's apartment where she found Marchand awaiting his master's final instructions. This servant's devotion to her brother had caused Pauline to show him many kindnesses. "Her beautiful face,"

he afterwards wrote, "was wet with tears as she came towards me with a diamond necklace, valued at 500,000 francs, in her hand. She tried to speak but the sobs choked her. I myself was deeply moved." Finally gaining control of her voice, she gave him the necklace, saying, "The Emperor has sent me to place this in your charge. If things go wrong he will surely have need of it. And Oh! Marchand, if he does fail, never forsake him. Take every care of him. Good-bye." As she extended her hand for him to kiss, Marchand tried to cheer her by expressing the hope that they would soon meet again. "I do not think so," replied Pauline in whose mind floated a vague but painful foreboding that she was never again to see this brother whom she worshipped. The Emperor came in at that moment, put his arm around the heartbroken Paulette, spoke some consoling words, and withdrew to the garden with her.

No one witnessed Napoleon's last moments with his mother and sister. He always shrank from exhibiting his personal feelings in public. He advised them to remain at Porto Ferrajo under the protection of his chamberlain, Signor Lapi, whom he had appointed President of the Governmental Junta and who was also commander of the Elban National Guard. He promised, as soon as he had made a successful landing in France, to send back a ship for them and their attendants. However critical and pressing his affairs might be, his first care would be for the safety of his mother and sister.

Between seven and eight o'clock nearly everyone had gone aboard ship. The Emperor, with General Bertrand, drove down to the port in the little open carriage drawn by two ponies that belonged to Pauline. As he entered his barge, the troops burst out with the ringing strains of the *Marseillaise* in which they were joined by the crowds of Elbans on the shore. The last great adventure had begun. From the windows of the palace Madame Mère and Pauline watched the little flotilla as it stole silently away in the moonlight.

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§ III

Colonel Campbell's Return—His Interview with Pauline

COLONEL CAMPBELL returned to Leghorn on the twenty-sixth of February and found awaiting him, besides Captain Adye, a disquieting batch of rumors and reports of suspicious incidents taking place on Elba. Amongst other things, he was informed that three days previously four or five large packing cases belonging to the Princess Pauline had come to Leghorn consigned to a Greek merchant there by M. Sisco, a merchant of Porto Ferrajo. The latter sent word that they contained the gold and silver plate of the Princess, were insured for five thousand dollars, and that the keys and instructions regarding the sale of this property would arrive shortly.

Not a breath of air was stirring when Campbell went on board ship that evening; an exasperating calm settled down on the sea, and it was not until Monday morning that a light breeze enabled Captain Adye to weigh anchor. The wind failed him again and again during the day, and daylight on Tuesday found them becalmed six or seven miles off Porto Ferrajo. Unable

to endure further delay, Campbell had himself rowed ashore in one of the ship's boats. An excited English resident poured out the news to him.

There is some discrepancy in the accounts given of the Commissioner's further proceedings. French writers assert that after failing to elicit any useful information from Madame Bertrand he visited Pauline, roughly cross-questioned her as to Napoleon's destination, and said: "Your brother has broken his parole, for he had promised not to leave the island; but the Mediterranean is full of warships and he is at this moment a prisoner." He assumed such a threatening and discourteous tone that the Princess reminded him sharply and imperiously that she was not accustomed to being spoken to in that manner.

Colonel Campbell, in his *Journal*, gives a very different version. After fruitlessly questioning Madame Bertrand and Governor Lapi, he started back for the ship. In passing the residence of Madame Mère, to which Pauline had gone after the Emperor's departure, he observed some sentries of the National Guard at the door and told them that if Madame or the Princess had letters to send to Leghorn or any commissions it was possible for him to execute on their behalf, he would be happy to serve them. He was well on his way down to the landing place when a messenger from the Princess overtook him with the request that he return. What followed is best told in his own words; the scene

and Pauline's motives in desiring the interview have been interpreted in widely varying ways.

"After being detained for a minute or more in the antechamber, I sent in to say that I was under the necessity of departing immediately, as the frigate would otherwise leave without me. She then came out and made me sit down beside her, drawing her chair gradually still closer, as if she waited for me to make some *private* communication. I merely told her that as perhaps she might have some commands for the Continent, I would willingly receive them. She asked me, with every appearance of anxiety, if I had nothing to say to her, and what I would advise her to do; said she had already written to her husband, Prince Borghese, who was now at Leghorn, and requested me to tell him that she wished to go to Rome immediately. I told her that my advice in the meantime would be to remain at Elba. She then went on to protest her ignorance of Napoleon's intended departure, and of his present destination; laid hold of my hand and pressed it to her heart, that I might feel how much she was agitated. However, she did not appear to be so, and there was rather a smile upon her countenance. She inquired whether the Emperor had been taken? I told her I could not exactly say he was, but that there was every probability of it. During this conversation she dropped a hint of her belief in his destination being for France: upon which I smiled and said, 'O non! ce n'est pas si

loin, c'est à Naples'; for I fancied (for the moment) she mentioned France purposely to deceive me."

Returning to the ship, Campbell discussed with Adye the probable direction taken by Napoleon. As he was now inclined to think the Emperor would endeavor to seize some strong place near Nice, or between Nice and Turin, they decided to proceed to Antibes. Next day, they met the French frigate *Fleur-de-Lys*, commanded by the Chevalier de Garat, who knew nothing of Napoleon's escape, although his sole duty was to cruise off Elba and prevent just such a happening. After a renewed study of the situation, it was agreed that Garat should sail back to Antibes, while Adye and Campbell retraced their course to Elba and the mainland, on the theory that the Emperor might be concealed behind Capraia from which base he could descend upon Leghorn. On March 5, they learned from a passing ship that Napoleon had safely landed his little force in the Golfe de Juan, west of Antibes, on the afternoon of March 1. Had Campbell not stopped to consult with Garat, he would have caught the Emperor just on the point of disembarking. He thus lost, as he says, "the glorious chance, so nearly at our command, of destroying him."

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§ IV

Pauline Leaves Elba and Goes to Compignano—Her Detention There by the Austrians—Napoleon's Effort to Secure Her Release—Becomes Ill and Is Allowed to Go to Lucca—Prostrated at News of Waterloo—Is Permitted to Go to Rome

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THE Princess had shown a brave and smiling front in the presence of Campbell, but there was fear in her heart as to what punitive measures the stern Scot, with his single-minded devotion to duty from which no wiles could seduce or deflect him, might take with respect to herself. Dire possibilities rose to her mind. If Campbell returned to Elba having failed to trace the Emperor, Pauline could not escape him nor could she be sure that the Elban authorities could protect her against the representatives of France and England supported by the guns of their warships. She might be deported to Austria and kept from all communication with her family, or she might be held as a hostage and imprisoned pending Napoleon's capture or surrender. With quick decision she resolved to leave the island before the English Commissioner returned, go to her sister Élisa's château of Compignano in the Prin-

cipality of Lucca, and there await the outcome of Napoleon's adventure. Her preparations were completed within forty-eight hours. To Lieutenant Monier, an engineer officer devoted to the Emperor, she confided the task of securing a small but seaworthy boat and fitting it up comfortably for her transit to the mainland. Bidding her mother farewell, the Princess embarked secretly at two o'clock in the morning of March 4, accompanied by Monier, two of her ladies, a courier, and four domestics.

They landed the following afternoon on the marshy shore near Volterra where some customs officials gave up their rooms to the Princess so that she might have a few hours' rest and refreshment. The little party took to their boat again at dusk, passed the night at sea, and arrived at Viareggio about midday, March 5. Summoned by the mayor to state her destination, she gave it frankly—her sister's property at Compignano, about a league from Viareggio—and was allowed to proceed in her sedan chair. By evening, the Princess, with Madame Le Bel and the Countess de Molo, was installed in the apartments on the first floor of the château, while Lieutenant Monier kept guard on the ground floor. At midnight they were awakened by the calls of soldiers, and the clatter of horses' hoofs. The Austrian Governor of Lucca, informed of the Princess's arrival by the mayor of Viareggio, had ordered the château surrounded and placed under guard. At five o'clock in the morning the officer commanding the

troops insisted on seeing Pauline in person. He informed her that having been charged with the duty of protecting her, he must forbid the receiving of any visitors, and that no one would be allowed to enter or leave the château without permission of his superiors. Pauline was a prisoner of state, if not of war, although for what reason no one could tell her. Only Austrian stupidity could envisage a dangerous enemy of the House of Hapsburg in this semi-invalid woman, alone in a vast, deserted château, far removed from any means of communication with the brother who had sent a thrill of terror through the Allied chancelleries. At Vienna an official bulletin reported the "capture" of the Princess, the Government treated it as a question of capital importance, and Talleyrand despatched a letter to Louis XVIII, announcing the momentous event. The really great man, of whom all these little men stood in such deadly fear, was then in the Tuileries telling Hortense and others of the solace and pleasure the presence of his mother and Pauline had given him at Elba.

None save those responsible for it took Pauline's captivity seriously; to others it appeared the most absurd of fictions. At Naples, Murat expressed the utmost indignation, and Caroline sought the intervention of the Austrian Ambassador, Mier. After a feeble effort to justify the detention of the Princess, he promised to communicate with Marshal Bellegarde, the Austrian Governor-General of Lombardy and Venice. Caro-

line also wrote a letter to Ferdinand, Grand Duke of Tuscany, requesting her sister's release, but he refused to see the bearer of the letter. Caroline's messenger, a Neapolitan officer, then went to Compignano where he gained admission to the Princess by representing himself as an Austrian, and revealed to her the state of affairs. She thereupon determined to send Monier to the Emperor and tell him of all these incidents and request his advice and assistance. A passport for the Lieutenant was obtained on March 22.

Pauline's situation during this dismal interval is revealed in the contemporary reports of the Lucca police to the Governor of Pisa. With Monier gone, her household consisted of only seven women. The Austrian guards had strict orders to keep the closest watch over her; correspondence was forbidden, and no visitor allowed to see her except by permission of the Governor, and then only in the presence of an officer of the guard. One of her recurring attacks of illness (nervousness nearly always brought one on) laid her low, and for days she was confined to her room and bed. Her repeated requests for a physician finally brought authorization for a Dr. Fideli to proceed to the château. The fantastic formalities with which his visit was attended prove the Austrian officials to have been utterly bereft of humor or a sense of reality.

As he approached the grounds, a detachment of soldiers surrounded the doctor and led him before an officer to whom he declared himself the bearer of a

letter to the Princess's lady-in-waiting. The officer opened and read the letter, then passed it on to the aforesaid lady who in turn asked that Dr. Fideli be permitted to enter. He found Pauline in bed suffering from a severe inflammation in her cheek. The tooth causing it was duly poulticed and the others given a dental cleansing, in which proceedings the doctor was assisted by the officer who had followed him into the Princess's bedchamber. Pauline asked for news of what was happening abroad, and hotly denounced the treatment she was being subjected to, which was the more unjust, she said, in view of the fact that the state of her health obviously precluded her from any treasonable or hostile actions. The cautious Fideli's answers were safely vague and noncommittal. After leaving his patient, the doctor dined with the officer of the guard, and was then ceremoniously dismissed with an honorarium of two hundred francs and the expenses of his journey.

Napoleon, on arriving in Paris, though speedily immersed in a thousand intricacies of government, war, and diplomacy, did not forget the needs or interests of his mother and Pauline. He immediately ordered a frigate sent to Porto Ferrajo to take off the former and the Princess if she were still there. Negligence of some sort delayed the execution of this order until April 10, by which time Madame Mère had departed on a vessel sent from Naples for her by Caroline. A considerable number of the cases containing Pauline's furniture, for-

warded the previous year to Marseilles, had been seized and put under sequestration at that port when the Bonaparte properties had been confiscated. Napoleon ordered them released. On March 31, he told Mollien, his Finance Minister, to investigate the condition of the lands and properties granted to Pauline under the Empire, and find out why the income from them had not been paid in to her account as Duchess of Guastalla.

When, on May 23, the Emperor learned from Lieutenant Monier that Pauline was held a prisoner by the Austrians, he summoned Caulaincourt, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Decrès, Minister of the Navy, and directed them to draft in concert, that same night, peremptory letters to the Grand Duke of Tuscany and his Foreign Minister demanding the release of the Princess and her safe return into French hands; and stating further that her detention was contrary to justice, to the law of nations, and accepted usage, and could serve no possible public interest. The *Dryade* was to be held at Toulon to take the messenger bearing these letters of the Emperor. Arriving off Leghorn, this officer's instructions were to deliver the letters to the Grand Duke's Minister, to insist on an immediate response, and request that the Princess be allowed to come at once aboard the frigate which had been sent to bring her back. The Emperor outlined his instructions with his usual clear conciseness and more than his usual emphasis. They should have been carried out on the spot. But in passing through the minds and hands of his

Ministers, they became vague, diluted, and indecisive. Not one of them was ever executed, and no one knows exactly why. Decrès may have been afraid to risk the *Dryade* on account of the increased number of English cruisers in the Mediterranean; or, subordinates in the ministerial offices may not have realized the importance of these particular instructions amid the whirlwind of activity stirred up in the departments by Napoleon's preparations for the campaign that ended at Waterloo. But the record of the Emperor's prompt and sincere effort to rescue his sister stands clear, and proves that Pauline's faith in her brother's affection was justified.

Meanwhile, at Compignano, Pauline was a prey to both illness and fears lest she be forcibly transferred to Florence, or, still worse, into Austria itself, to Gratz or to Brünn—fears for which she appears to have had real grounds although the evidence is obscure. To prevent this she had recourse to an old device which had served her well in the past, viz.: to use her ill-health as a weapon of defense. In response to her importunities the Austrian authorities sent physician after physician to examine her. First came a Dr. Martelli, then a surgeon, various others, and at last the celebrated Vacca, who had been Court Physician to Élisa, when the latter was Grand Duchess of Tuscany. It was even found necessary to establish a physician in residence at the château in order to give the Princess the continued attention her supposedly precarious state required. Vacca seems to have been taken fully into her con-

fidence, for he rendered her some useful services other than medical; he acted, for example, as an intermediary for the receiving and transmitting of her letters. In the end, influenced partly by the authority and standing of Vacca, and partly by the excessively generous fees paid them by Pauline, all the medical men unanimously agreed that a long journey would seriously endanger the life of the Princess, and that the utmost she could support would be removal to the near-by baths of Lucca —where, of course, the artful lady ardently desired to go. The baffled Austrians gave up, and on June 5 Pauline received official permission to go to Lucca. As always when she had gained her point, the Princess was able to rise immediately from her bed of pain. She started on the instant and, with an escort of twenty Austrian soldiers, arrived at the baths on the following day, accompanied only by the Countess de Molo, Dr. Pacini, and one or two servants. All the other members of the once imposing and impressive household of the Princess Borghese had left her, or been allowed to go because of her need to economize, or sent to France on various missions connected with her family or financial affairs.

At Lucca, an interlude of sunshine ensued after the gloomy two months of incarceration at Compignano. From a Genoese banker, Pauline heard such cheering reports of the Emperor's success that she began to indulge in dreams of soon being in Paris, with Napoleon restored to his throne and she to her former rank and

wealth. Official surveillance of her had greatly relaxed at the baths and the dread of deportation to Brünn gradually faded away. Her jewels, the one piece of tangible property she now possessed and whose seizure by the Austrians she had constantly feared, had been placed in the safe custody of a friend of Dr. Pacini. From the faithful Michelot came the unexpected good news that he had been able to place 215,000 francs to her credit with bankers in Leghorn and Rome. And around her there had gathered, eager to see the famous sister of Napoleon, a little group of admirers from among the English, Polish, and Russian gentlemen passing the season at Lucca. Once more there was a return of the laughing, vivacious Princess of the Empire as she breathed in the incense of adoration and lulled her mind with visions of an early renewal of her life of Imperial splendor.

With brutal suddenness, Werklein, the Austrian Governor of Lucca whose hostility to her had been persistent from the day she landed at Viareggio, broke the news of Waterloo, the Emperor's second abdication, and condemnation to a remote exile. Pauline's world crashed into ruins, and her Castles in Spain vanished like the morning mist. Waves of misery and despair swept over her, and for days she lay prostrate, a pitiful figure, soul-sick and utterly exhausted physically. "Death would really be a blessing in the state she now is," wrote the Countess de Molo. Though she over-

came, at length, the immediate effects of the shock, the wound to the spirit of Pauline was mortal.

The details of the Emperor's tragedy, news of her scattered family, came through to Lucca slowly and in fragments from which she could form no coherent picture. All correspondence addressed to her, all letters written by her, were seized and opened by Austrian and other officials. Michelot in Paris, becoming aware of this, despatched letters of Lucien and Cardinal Fesch by special messenger, but the latter was arrested by the Austrians and the letters published in the newspapers. Pauline's first sight of them was in the pages of a Milan journal. She sought in vain to ascertain what had become of her mother, and of Colonel Duchand. One of her letters to Duchand was seized at Lyons. In it she gave the fervent assurance that love for him had survived all her recent agonies and misfortunes. She had, in truth, never loved a finer, braver man, and he was more than worthy of such love as she had to bestow on him. At Waterloo, he had fought like a lion at the head of the Guards' artillery, and after the Emperor's abdication he refused to swear allegiance to the Bourbons. Resigning from his regiment he issued a last order of the day to his artillerymen in words of marmoreal felicity: "It is not I who will place a new standard above your ranks." He, too, departed into exile, but his first thought was to find the Princess whom he loved with such fidelity and knightly grace.

In the early part of August Pauline appears to have

received authoritative assurances that she would soon be freed from the restrictions placed upon her, and she also learned that her mother and uncle were at Sienna seeking some safe asylum in Tuscany or the Papal States. For herself, she decided to go to Rome as soon as her health permitted. From Paris, Michelot sent a final but far from satisfactory account of the state of her fortune. In addition to the 215,000 francs already deposited with Italian bankers, there was a balance of 250,000 francs still due her from the sale of the Hôtel Charost. From her share in the Leclerc properties no arrears of income were forthcoming and there was little present prospect of anything being paid in the future. Her total capital, therefore, amounted to a little over 400,000 francs; she had what remained of her jewels; something might be realized from the sale of her furniture and plate; and there was the possibility of an allowance from Borghese—but only a possibility. The jewels she had given Napoleon to aid him in his last campaign were found in his carriage which was captured at Waterloo. They were never afterwards traced.

In October, convinced at last that Pauline was no longer a dangerous enemy of the Allied powers and a potential disturber of the peace of Europe, Vienna granted her permission to go to Rome, provided the journey was made by sea. No rational reason can be assigned for this seemingly absurd proviso. Perhaps some one at the Ballplatz knew that the Princess was

an extremely poor sailor. She embarked at Viareggio, October 12, but, exhausted by seasickness, landed at Piombino in the evening and spent the night with a French family there. The next morning a touching scene met her eyes as she went down to the ship to resume her voyage. Assembled on the quai, all dressed in holiday costume, were the chief officials and principal citizens of the little town. They had come to bid Pauline a kindly and respectful adieu, because of their pleasant memories of her sister who had recently reigned over them as Princess of Piombino. Pauline was much moved by this display of respect by the former subjects of Élisa, particularly as it had called for not a little courage in view of the Austrian domination of northern Italy.

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§ V

Need of Money—Separation from Prince Borghese —Change in Pauline's Character—Her Salon in Rome—English Friends—Illness in 1818

WHEN, after the *débâcle* of the Napoleonic Empire at Waterloo, the Bonapartes dispersed through Europe, it was to Italy, the source whence their race had sprung, that some atavistic instinct drew most of them. Elisa went to Bologna and Trieste, Caroline to Florence, and in Rome Pauline found Madame Mère, Cardinal Fesch, and her brothers Louis and Lucien. All seven, and Joseph in addition, were destined to die and be buried in the soil of their ancient mother land. Pauline's first care after her arrival was to secure ready money to meet pressing needs. She sold her beautiful collection of *vermeil* to Tortonia, the newly-rich banker, for 180,000 francs, and disposed of her furs and furniture, and the frames she had made for Borghese's pictures. Her Paris agent was commanded to "Sell, sell as quickly as possible, and for whatever price you can get." In a short while, she seems to have accumulated a sufficient sum to enable her to

settle down comfortably in the city where she was to spend most of her remaining years.

Concurrently, she also had to deal with another matter that had a not unimportant bearing upon the state of her fortune. Prince Borghese, determined to break the last bond of his unhappy alliance with the Bonapartes, had instituted a suit for absolute divorce. Pauline, willing enough to be freed from the union, but only on her own terms and to her advantage, countered with an application for a legal separation, which was not at all what the Prince desired. The Prince wrote voluminous letters from Florence detailing his causes of complaint and cataloguing the endless series of sufferings he had experienced at her hands. It was not of her infidelities that he complained, but of her changes in the dinner hour, her lack of respect for him, her caprices, her insistence on living in France, her treatment of him in Paris, where he had been compelled to pay for his food and lodging as though he were staying at an inn. Everything that he stated was doubtless true, yet when all the clauses of his indictment were viewed as a whole, the resulting effect was comic rather than tragic in the eyes of his contemporaries. Monsignor Cuneo, Grand Inquisitor of the Holy Office, was one of those protecting Pauline's interests; he advised, probably for form's sake, a reconciliation and resumption of marital life and relations. Borghese rejected the suggestion and so played right into Pauline's hands. She would have done the same thing had the idea been seriously

entertained. An observation of hers in a letter to Lucien has deliciously amusing implications. "This wretch of a Borghese refuses to pay the bills incurred on his behalf here. It is simply horrible, this always being the victim of men." Pauline, "a victim of men!" Wrath had momentarily dulled the Princess's sense of humor. Borghese fought stubbornly, but was outmaneuvered on nearly every major point. In the end, Pauline, being popular with both the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities, gained all her principal objectives, while the Prince, never popular anywhere, lost his. She was granted the continuance of the allowance of 20,000 francs a year stipulated in her marriage contract, the use of her apartments in the Villa Borghese, and a share of the furniture and jewels acquired since the marriage. The Prince insisted on the return intact of the Borghese family jewels, but, in new settings and combinations these had become almost inextricably mixed with those bought by Pauline or given her by Napoleon. A Paris jeweler had to be called in to distinguish and separate them. The Prince then raised another point. "With regard to the jewels," wrote Pauline, "the Prince insists that I conform to the custom of certain Roman families, which is to leave those belonging to the Borghese family in his custody, or that of some one designated by him, and, whenever I desire to wear them I am to make special application for them. I will never submit to such a condition." The case came to an end at last, and the Prin-

cess Borghese was awarded a decree of separation from the Prince.

The events and experiences of the past two years had wrought permanent modifications in Pauline's character. Her mind matured, and her conduct became more sober and restrained, privately and publicly. Perpetual anxiety regarding the brother in far-off St. Helena and ceaseless efforts to increase his comfort and alleviate his misery dominated her life throughout the years from 1816 to 1821. Repeatedly and sincerely she petitioned the English Government to permit her to go to him and share his exile, and no one living could have done more, or so much, to make it endurable for him. But the privilege was denied her, and Napoleon himself forbade it because he felt sure the climate of St. Helena would have the same destructive effect upon her health that it had on his. And he had another reason. "I would not," he said, "have her witness the degrading state to which I am reduced and the insults to which I am subjected." With a lessened concentration on herself and her exclusively personal interests, she showed more thought and consideration for others than ever before in her life. Dress and the cult of her beauty—and she was still radiantly beautiful—were, as ever, ruling interests, never forgotten, but her days of amorous intrigue and love lighter than air were definitely over, the one-time feverish, morbid thirst for admiration and homage slaked. These latter were still given in abundance and she took pleasure in them,

but she no longer rode forth to battle for them and she paid no price to receive them. Men continued to love her and to make love to her, but could not elicit the slightest response in kind from her. Pauline listened, smiled, was gracious and friendly, and let it stop there. What more had she to learn, or know, or feel, or experience in the sphere of the emotions? Had she not scaled all their heights, plumbed all their depths? No more lovers cross the screen of her story in succession to Fréron, Forbin, De Canouville, and Duchand.

In this calmer, more disciplined manner of life, Pauline found her principal happiness and diversion in the society of the distinguished, brilliant, or famous men and women whom she invited or who sought admittance to her drawing rooms in the lovely villa she had acquired near the Porta Pia. Its twenty acres of ground combined the varied elegance of an English park with the majestic regularity of a French *jardin*, and at a central point she had constructed a little casino surrounded by orange and citron trees. Pauline furnished the interior of the house entirely according to her own taste and preferences. Good judges called it the most attractive of all the Bonaparte residences, uniting English comfort with Italian taste and French distinction.

The favor and protection of the kindly Pius VII gave the Princess an assured social position and status and the Villa Paolina soon became the rendezvous of the leading personages of Rome and visitors of distinction from

every European country. Her evening receptions and concerts were famous for their taste and luxury, her private parties for their simplicity and pleasing informality. Painters, sculptors, men of letters, statesmen, diplomats, and ecclesiastics mingled there, attracted by the magnetic qualities of her unique personality. "Since the time of Pope Joan, no woman has been surrounded by so many Cardinals as the beautiful Pauline," wrote Lady Sydney Morgan, author of *The Wild Irish Girl*, a popular novel of that day. "Her graciousness is exquisite," reported a French visitor in 1819, "and her genuine greatness of soul indicates that she was born for the rank that she holds." And the same writer notes that Pauline's beauty was even then, after all her physical and mental sufferings, as incomparable and seductive as ever, and that the artists of Rome, like those of Paris a decade before, could only compare the soft lines and perfect proportions of her body to those of the Medicean Venus. Thus Pauline reigned over her salon, again an acknowledged queen of society, displaying her genius for directing the intricate mechanism required to attract and hold, year after year, the active interest of a varied, brilliant, cosmopolitan circle of friends and admirers. She had been the first Princess in her family and was now the only one; many of her contemporaries would have asserted that she was the sole Bonaparte to grace the rank or who deserved to retain it.

The English were conspicuous among the foreigners passing through Rome or spending the winters there

who sought presentation to the Princess or became habitual visitors to her salon. They included noblemen of high rank and commoners of wealth or distinction in art, letters, and public life. As early as December, 1816, Metternich was warning members of the English Cabinet of the eagerness with which leading men of the Opposition party were "profiting by their sojourn in Rome to make close acquaintance with members of the Bonaparte family." The special attention and favors accorded by the Princess Borghese to these representatives of the nation so largely responsible for Napoleon's downfall caused some unfavorable comment in certain French circles. Her critics were curiously blind to the reason of policy underlying the conduct of the Princess in this respect. England held her brother in a captivity galling to him beyond description; every letter she received told of the misery and unhappiness he was enduring at St. Helena. Her one guiding purpose now was to render him all the aid in her power. If, then, a word, request, or representation of hers could induce influential Englishmen to persuade their Government to adopt a more lenient, less mortifying treatment of their illustrious prisoner, Pauline would not hesitate to seek their assistance, appeal to their generosity, and exert all her personal charm to influence them. Napoleon was aware of her efforts and approved them. "Pauline is in Rome," he observed to Gourgaud, "where she sees many English people. All the better, so many of my enemies are gained over by her."

At the head of Pauline's English friends was the Marquis of Douglas. The ranks, titles, and distinctions to which he was soon (February 16, 1819) to succeed as tenth Duke of Hamilton constituted a small peerage in themselves and made their holder one of the greatest *grand seigneurs* in Europe. In the peerage of Scotland they included the marquisates of Hamilton, Douglas, and Clydesdale, the earldoms of Angus (created in 1389), Arran, Lanark, and Selkirk, the baronies of Hamilton, Avon, Polmont, Mackanshire, Innerdale, and Abernethy, premier peer of Scotland, and Hereditary Keeper of Holyrood House; Duke of Brandon and Baron Dutton in England, and Duke of Châtelherault in France. One of the outstanding characteristics of the Marquis was an intense family pride: through his descent from the Regent Arran he firmly believed himself to be the true heir to the throne of Scotland. An ardent admirer of Napoleon, the Marquis had visited the Emperor on Elba and corresponded with him when all communication between England and France had been officially forbidden. He was, therefore, a personage to be reckoned with, one whose views and opinions would carry weight in England, even though he belonged to the party in Opposition. His constant association with the Princess Pauline, both in her drawing room in the Villa Paolina, and at Lucca when she went there in the summer of 1818, sent shivers of apprehension through the Allied diplomats who were forever dreading conspiracies aimed at the release

or escape of Napoleon from St. Helena. As the Marquis was fifty years old, full of rheumatism, and married to one of the most beautiful Englishwomen of her time, and Pauline seemed to have definitely abandoned her career as *une grande amoureuse*, their nervous watchers were forced to conclude that it was politics and not love that formed the bond of common interest between the great Whig nobleman and the sister of Bonaparte.

George Villiers, fifth Earl of Jersey, was another habitual visitor in Pauline's salon. A pillar of the turf and "perhaps the most elegant rider to hounds the world ever saw," he was more like the men who had sat at the Princess's feet in earlier days, and the private correspondence of the period leaves one in no doubt but that she made a deep impression upon him. "Lord Jersey looks old and careworn, and has evidently been making love to La Princesse Borghese," said Harriet, Countess Granville, in a family letter. "Pauline is Villiers' friend. He says she is clever and delightful, but I do not know her. He was a great deal with her, is very fond of her," etc. Again, in another place, the slightly acidulous Countess notes: "He is shy of talking of Pauline, but not so Lady Jersey."

Elizabeth, second wife of William, fifth Duke of Devonshire (his first was Georgiana "the Beautiful Duchess"), was in Rome during the winter of 1816-17, and one of her letters gives a glimpse of the talented company that gathered around the Princess at her evening parties. "Mr. Playfair, Mr. Elmsley, Mr. Sotheby

are among the clever men of the set now here, and all almost alike flock to the Princess Borghese; and the grave Lord Lansdowne, the silent Lord Jersey, the politician Mr. Brougham, all go and play aux petits joux with Pauline. Forfeits condemned Lord Jersey to recite; he got off by promising to waltz. Lord Cowper was to soupirer pour une dame, and so on. She shows her fine plate with the eagle, etc., and gets dozens of fine dresses from Paris. I admire the Pope's firmness in letting them all of that family remain at Rome, but I think that the English should put a little reason in their eagerness to go to her."

One suspects the English ladies of being a trifle piqued by the apparently irresistible attraction their men felt toward the Princess, but the character of those in the group mentioned by the Dowager Duchess is at once testimony and tribute to Pauline's possession of intellectual as well as physical charms. Peter Elmsley was one of the finest classical scholars of his day, famous for his critical work on Sophocles and Euripides, and for his skill in removing papyri from the ruins of Herculaneum. Dr. John Playfair was a distinguished mathematician and one of the founders of the modern science of geology. William Sotheby was a wealthy amateur of letters, a poet (Byron spoke well of his verse) and gifted translator of Wieland's *Oberon* and Vergil's *Georgics*. Lord Brougham, the great Whig orator, statesman, and Lord Chancellor of England, one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review*, famous for his

great learning and versatility, was one of the most remarkable men of the nineteenth century. The presence of such an assemblage of noblemen, gentlemen, and scholars in the same drawing room at the same time would be a social triumph in any age or country; it is eloquent proof that the hostess possessed talents in her sphere equal to those of her guests in theirs.

Repeated warnings that the baths and waters of Lucca were too violent in their effects upon her frail and long tortured body went unheeded by Pauline. She was very fond of the place; many of her English friends were accustomed to pass the summer there and lavished every kind of delightful entertainment upon her, and she was unwilling to forego this pleasure. Returning to Rome, October 24, 1818, a virulent gastric fever attacked the Princess and she hovered for weeks between life and death. On December 5 Cardinal Fesch reported her as safely convalescing, but this attack had shattered and undermined her strength more severely than any previous one had done. After another winter of prolonged illness in 1820, she was finally induced to spend the next summer at Frascati with her mother and the Cardinal. The results were beneficial in every way; she came back improved to a degree none of her friends had imagined possible. Never was renewal of health and strength more opportune; she was on the eve of an ordeal that called for all the strength, physical and moral, that she possessed.

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§ VI

Failure of English Friends to Aid the Emperor—Napoleon Asks for a Priest and Physician—How Fesch Chose Them—Madame Mère and Fesch under the Influence of a Clairvoyant—Pauline's Protests

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NO TANGIBLE results followed whatever attempts Pauline may have made to induce the Marquis of Douglas or Lord Brougham to bring pressure on their Government to ease the conditions of Napoleon's imprisonment, or from any action they may have taken in response to her pleading. The public protests in England itself of the Duke of Sussex and Lord Holland were wholly unavailing, and if they failed to move Ministers there was little likelihood of others succeeding. The British Ministry had never relished the Emperor's surrendering himself to them; they would have much preferred his capture and punishment by the Bourbons. Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister's, words to Castlereagh, the Foreign Secretary, accurately reflect the Government's attitude: "We wish that the King of France would hang or shoot Buonaparte, as the best termination of the business." Lord Rosebery's com-

ment is perhaps just, but it would have seemed excessively mild to his Whig ancestors: "If St. Helena recalls painful memories to the French, much more poignant are those that it excites among ourselves."

One small favor Pauline did secure through the solicitation of her English friends, viz., the direct receipt from the Colonial Office in London of personal news of the Emperor whenever official reports arrived from St. Helena. By thus learning on the best authority that her brother was at least alive and still on the island she was saved the harrowing uncertainty the constantly circulated reports of his death or escape would otherwise have caused her. The private letters that came at long and irregular intervals saddened her inexpressibly. Though written by the faithful Bertrand they were for the most part dictated by Napoleon and told mainly of his ill-health, loneliness, or some new, actual or fancied, humiliation inflicted by his English jailers. Pauline was in despair at her helplessness to aid him. A secret agent's report in 1817 told of her trying to sell some of her gems to secure money to send him, but it was not money of which he stood in most need. It was spiritual and intellectual companionship, the intercourse of equals, and a mode of life that did not outrage his intelligence and self-respect.

In May, 1818, Fesch received a gloomy letter from Bertrand telling of recent deaths among the household staff, and of the wide prevalence of dysentery and chronic liver and stomach troubles among the Euro-

peans on the island. The Emperor earnestly requested that a competent doctor be sent out as soon as possible, and also a Roman Catholic priest, a new maître d'hôtel, and a cook. He desired that the priest be an educated man, under forty years of age, and not infected with anti-Gallic principles. The two servants were to be chosen from persons formerly in his service and known to be absolutely trustworthy, for he had developed (quite needlessly) a fear of being poisoned. It was well known in the family that his preference among physicians would be Dr. Foureau de Beauregard who had been with him day and night through the campaign of 1814. "I have no faith in medicine," Napoleon often said, "but I have in Corvisart," and Foureau de Beauregard was one of Corvisart's most brilliant pupils.

The Cardinal immediately initiated measures with a view to carrying out the Emperor's wishes. No difficulty presented itself regarding the two servants required. Madame Mère supplied the maître d'hôtel from her household, and Pauline contributed her cook, Jacques Chandelier, who had learned his art in the Emperor's own kitchens during the Empire. Correspondence was begun respecting a suitable priest. Foureau de Beauregard, who was then with Jérôme and Catherine, expressed himself as eager and willing to join Napoleon. "He seems to us," wrote Catherine to Madame Mère, "preferable to all others. He consents with pleasure to fulfill so worthy a task." Napoleon's requests all seemed well on the way to successful accomplishment when

Fesch's whole manner and method of proceeding changed in a sudden and most inexplicable way. He developed a tortuous slowness of action, broke off negotiations that were on the point of conclusion, failed to answer important letters, provoked delays, and threw the whole affair into the utmost confusion. Reversing all the plans that had been made on the basis of Napoleon's known wishes, he finally selected a priest and doctor whose characters left Pauline and the Emperor's friends dismayed and indignant: the Abbé Buonavita, an aged priest who had spent most of his life as a missionary in Mexico and Paraguay, and had recently suffered a slight apoplectic stroke; and a Dr. Antommarchi, young, inexperienced, and bumptious, with little intelligence but enormous conceit. In all this he was firmly supported by Madame Mère, and it was Colonna, her chief gentleman-in-waiting, who had strongly recommended Dr. Antommarchi. Pressed by Pauline and others to give his reasons for these astonishing selections and his dilatory actions, the Cardinal exploded a bombshell. He calmly announced that he, Madame Mère, and Colonna were convinced that Napoleon was no longer at St. Helena, and that the little group of people they were sending out would not find him there; that this being the case the expedition was a useless one, and that further expense or a higher salaried priest and doctor would not be justified. They had come to believe this, he said, as a result of direct revelations from Heaven. To Catherine, Jérôme's wife,

to Élisa, and to Joseph in the United States, Madame Mère described Napoleon's translation from St. Helena as a fact positively known to her, but that the English Government and newspapers were concealing it from the world. As the Cardinal had full authority, no one could interfere or reverse his decisions and the tragi-comedy went on. When, in February, 1819, the cook and the doctor and the priest at last set out from Rome, Fesch insisted that they would never reach their destination. "There is a certain person who has assured us that three or four days previous to January 19 the Emperor received permission to leave St. Helena and that the English have already transferred him elsewhere. Everything in his life has been miraculous and I am compelled to believe in this miracle. His whole existence has been a phenomenon and God may be continuing to do His will with him."

This extraordinary affair would have remained an insoluble mystery except for the fortunate survival of two letters of Pauline written two years later. From them it appears that her mother and uncle had come under the influence of and been completely duped by a clairvoyant. Whether this person was an unusually clever specimen of this class of professional impostor, or whether, as Pauline believed, she was a tool of Austria, one cannot say, as the Princess's letters are, it is believed, the sole source of information regarding her. Of the sincerity of Pauline's belief and indignation there is no doubt.

"I have indeed suffered agonies these past two years," she says. "My uncle, mother, and Colonna allowed themselves to be guided by a treacherous woman, a German and spy of the Court of Austria. She claimed that the Madonna had appeared to her and told her that the Emperor was no longer there, and a thousand other incredible things. The Cardinal was completely duped, because he said publicly that the Emperor was no longer at St. Helena and that he had had revelations telling where he was.

"Throughout these two years Louis and I have done everything in our power to destroy the illusions created by this soothsayer [*sorcière*], but it has been wasted effort. My uncle has concealed from us the news and letters he received from St. Helena, saying that this silence ought to be sufficient proof for us.

"*Maman* is devoutly religious and has given lavishly to this woman who is in league with her confessor, who is himself the chief agent of other priests. The whole affair is a horrible conspiracy and Colonna is behind it all. He has been at the church from morning until night.

"As a result of all this, Madame and the Cardinal have considered all the letters of the last two years to be falsifications and the signatures forgeries, composed by the English Government to make it believed that the Emperor is still at St. Helena. My mother and the Cardinal say they know positively that His Majesty

was taken up by Angels and borne to a country where his health was greatly improved, and that they receive news of him. [All Madame Mère's letters came to her through the Cardinal.] This witch-woman has made use of every political event to serve and attain her purpose. Madame's entire household was won over by her, with Colonna at their head. My mother and uncle did their utmost to draw my brother Louis and myself into their absurd beliefs, but we tried every means of curing them of their blindness and ended by ridiculing their credulousness. I cannot speak of the scenes, the quarrels, and the coldness their conduct has naturally brought about between us."

The nondescript group sent out by Fesch arrived at St. Helena, September 20, 1819. After eighteen months of dreary, impatient waiting, the lonely man in the remote South Atlantic isle, thirsting for sympathetic intellectual companionship, in desperate need of skilled medical service, received a venerable cleric stricken with aphasia, and an insufferably presumptuous young doctor who believed the Emperor's illness to be only a political ruse. Neither of them could speak intelligible French. "It is just such a selection as I should expect from my uncle Fesch," commented Napoleon bitterly. "Always the same intelligence, the same discernment!" The cook and the maître d'hôtel were good and well-intentioned men; they at least spoke French and gave him the comfort of news of his mother and Pauline.

But the cook was soon distorted and helpless with rheumatism, and the other proved abysmally ignorant of the duties of his office, being unable to prepare even a cup of coffee. Again began the weary process of writing to Europe for substitutes for these impossible persons, and for some old comrade of the Emperor willing to share his exile for a few years.

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§ VII

Arrival of the Abbé Buonavita from St. Helena—Montholon's Letter Describing Napoleon's Critical State—Pauline's Letter to Lord Liverpool—Death of the Emperor

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THE ABBÉ BUONAVITA left St. Helena, March 17, 1821, bearing a letter of that date from Count Montholon to the Princess Pauline. It gave an exact description of the critical state of the Emperor's health and was to be delivered directly into the hands of the Princess—an instruction that was not without significance. Arriving in England, May 2, the Abbé was subjected to long delays there and in the Low Countries before he could secure a passport for Rome. Dr. Barry O'Meara, the Emperor's former physician at St. Helena, sought out the Abbé and extracted from him all that he had to tell of Napoleon and affairs on the island. O'Meara immediately communicated his information to Madame Mère and Fesch who must certainly have received it by the early part of June. Not a hint of what they had heard was given to Pauline. From some source, however, possibly the Colonial Office, she heard of Buonavita being in England, and wrote to

Lady Holland, June 29: "I beg you to give me any news you may have of my dear brother. I am very anxious because rumors are being circulated that he is in a very bad state of health. We have received no word from the priest who has returned from St. Helena. Perhaps it would be possible for you to see him and send me reliable information."

Buonavita reached Rome the first week in July. Pauline, going to bid her mother good-bye before departing for Frascati, was refused admittance on the ground that her mother was engaged with a visitor. When the Princess learned from a porter that the visitor was the Abbé Buonavita, she swept into her mother's room demanding to see him and hear the latest word from the Emperor. Fortunately, as she said, the Abbé had a message to hand her personally, otherwise everything would have been kept from her. The mother and uncle utterly discredited the news brought by Buonavita and refused to believe that he had left or even seen Napoleon at St. Helena, asserting again that they had proof of his presence elsewhere. Pauline threw herself at her mother's feet, imploring her to send away the woman and priest practicing such a shameful deception upon her. Madame Mère grew angry and replied that as she was her own mistress she would see whom she pleased. After a painful scene, the Princess withdrew declaring she would never see the Cardinal again. The coldness and indifference of her mother and uncle toward the travel-worn messenger from her brother touched the

kindlier springs of Pauline's emotions and she promptly took him under her care. "The Abbé Buonavita has been very badly treated," she wrote, "and the good old soul is deeply hurt. I am taking him with me to Frascati, for they would not give him a sou."

Montholon's letter was written in the third person and really dictated by the doomed Emperor. Pauline read it broken-heartedly through her tears. "His weakness is extreme. He can scarcely bear the fatigue of a half-hour's drive in his carriage, and can walk about in his room only when supported. The digestive organs have ceased to function and the stomach rejects everything taken into it. For a long time now, the Emperor has eaten neither meat nor bread nor vegetables; he exists only on soups and jellies." At the end came a despairing appeal to the sister upon whom he knew he could depend: "The Emperor earnestly hopes that Your Highness will inform influential Englishmen of his true state. He is dying, helpless, on this barren rock and his death struggle is frightful."

For four days Pauline wrote unceasingly to everyone she thought could be of assistance to Napoleon in his last critical hours, or to her in securing permission to go to him. Lord Brougham showed Creevey a letter he had received from the Princess begging his influence with the Government to allow her to join her brother. But the substance of all her urgent petitions is contained in the moving appeal she addressed to Lord Liverpool:

"Rome, 11th July, 1821.

My Lord,—the Abbé Buonavita who has just arrived at Rome from St. Helena, which he left on the 17th of last March, has brought us the most alarming news of the Emperor's health. I inclose you copies of letters which will give you the details of his physical sufferings. The malady by which he is attacked is mortal in St. Helena, and in the name of all the members of the family, I claim a change of climate from the English Government. If so just a demand be refused, it will be a sentence of death passed upon him, and in this case I demand permission to depart for St. Helena, to rejoin the Emperor and to receive his parting breath.

"I beg of you, my lord, to have the goodness, without delay, to solicit this authorization from your government, that I may be able to depart as soon as possible. As my state of health does not allow me to travel by land, my intentions would be to embark at Cività Vecchia to proceed to England, and to avail myself there of the first vessel which may sail for St. Helena: but I should wish that I may be permitted to go to London, in order to provide myself with whatever may be necessary for so long a voyage.

"If your government persist in suffering the Emperor to perish upon the rock of St. Helena, I intreat that your lordship, in order to remove all difficulties which might retard my departure, may extend your care to prevent the court of Rome from opposing obstacles. I know that the moments of the Emperor's life

are counted, and I should eternally reproach myself if I did not employ all the means in my power to soften his last hours, and to prove my entire devotion to his august person. If there should be any English vessels in Leghorn harbor at the moment of my departure, I would ask as a favor that one might be permitted to take me at Cività Vecchia and bring me to England.

"I beg, my lord, that you will communicate my letter and the inclosed copies to Lady Holland, who has always given proofs of the greatest interest for the Emperor, and assure her of my sentiments of friendship, and receive for yourself those of my consideration.

(Signed) Princess Pauline Borghese"

On July 15, Pauline drew up a letter to Montholon recounting what she had done, and adding: "In taking these steps I have consulted only my heart, for I am far from being as well as I could wish; but I trust that my strength will sustain me so that I may prove to the Emperor that no one loves him so much as I do."

The following day, July 16, 1821, all Rome learned officially that Napoleon had died at St. Helena on May 5, just as the great storm, which had swept the island during the hours of his death agony, uprooting its largest trees, died down, and the setting sun appeared in a blaze of prismatic glory.

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§ VIII

Pauline and Napoleon—Some Characteristics—Crushing Effect of the Emperor's Death—Gradual Decline in Health—Loss of Beauty—Last Will and Testament—Death

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THE bonds of affection and subtle affinity uniting Napoleon and his sister Pauline are unique in the tangled and often sordid family history of the Bonaparte clan. Pauline's title to Time's remembrance rests almost wholly in the character of her relationship to the brother who, the founders of religions alone excepted, has held the world's imagination captive more continuously and more arrestingly than any other mortal man. In her love and devotion to him she attained a degree of grandeur and greatness equal to his in the spheres of war and government. Pauline's surpassing beauty, some of whose semblance the world still possesses through the inspired chisel of Canova, would have been lost had she not been Napoleon's sister. In Corsica it would have withered and died, as many another lovely peasant or island girl's beauty has, under the burden of manual labor, poverty, and incessant child-bearing. He raised all his clinging tribe to wealth,

THE STATUE BY CANOVA IN THE PALAZZO BORGHESE, ROME

power, and royal estate, but it was only from her that he received indubitable evidence of gratitude or a response from the sources of the warmer, nobler human affections.

Amid the glories and trials of his stormy, multicolored career, in disappointment and in triumph, in hours of irresponsible play or crushing loneliness, when fawned upon by sycophants or betrayed by trusted friends, Napoleon knew that Pauline loved him because he was her brother, that to her he was the greatest of living men, that she could think no evil of him, would give herself to death if by so doing he would benefit. With this knowledge fixed always in his consciousness, no other in his family was or could be dearer to him. He was proud of her distinction as the most beautiful woman in Europe; he delighted in the taste and elegance of her dress and manners; he, better than anyone else, understood and was amused by her caprices, whims, raffish outbursts, and impish phantasies. Above all, he admired her easy mastery of Society, her deft handling of the levers controlling its intricate mechanism, the unhesitating way in which she trod its treacherous labyrinths. With all these things on the credit side of her account with him, Napoleon could readily overlook or forgive her delinquencies, which for the most part were petty, and due to the unchangeable fact that she was a woman. As for her liaisons, if he could not approve, he understood the reasons for them. The same hot southern blood flowed in the veins of

both sister and brother; he himself practiced no mortifications of the flesh. A deep substratum of paganism existed in her, a throw-back, perhaps, to the supposed Greek ancestry of the Bonapartes. She neither possessed nor professed the sense of modesty that Christian ethics stresses; consequently there was nothing hypocritical in her failure to exhibit it in practice. Aside from her occasional vexing stubbornness, Napoleon had little to complain of in her, and, though he gained every material possession the heart of man can desire, it may be doubted if anything in life gave him more continuous or unalloyed pleasure and satisfaction than the love of the Paulette whom he had first found romping, bare-legged, in the old home in Ajaccio.

She shared fully in the clan instincts of the Bonapartes; her amatory adventures were not permitted to encroach upon the domain of family interest or her obligations to it. However absorbed she might be in a love affair, she would suspend or set it aside if Napoleon commanded. No daughter could be more solicitous for her mother's comfort than Pauline. She endured hours of boredom with Madame Mère and Fesch at the card table—their only profane recreation; and she patiently associated herself, objectively, with her mother's assiduous church attendance and observance of prescribed religious rites. Among her brothers and sisters she was a sympathetic, harmonizing influence; she rarely quarreled with them, and when they did

amongst themselves, her mediation was accepted when that of others was refused.

The Princess reveled in the ease, soft comfort, and luxury Napoleon's fortunes brought her, was proud of the titles and honors she bore, and adored the jewels wealth enabled her to acquire in such regal abundance. Yet her essential self was independent of these things and could rise above them. A migrant, gypsy strain caused her to make her magnificent palaces merely places of fleeting residence. Rather than dwell in them for long periods of time she preferred the chance shelters of a remote watering place, a Mediterranean resort, a furnished villa, or an inn. At a minute's notice she could leave the thousand luxuries and scores of servants at Neuilly or Paris, and be content on the highways of France with her sedan chair, linen and bed, bathtub, enough dresses to be respectable, jewels—and a lover. Napoleon and Pauline were alike in their ability and frequent desire to exchange massed and stifling luxury for the simplicity of a cottage or an army tent.

That Pauline's love for Napoleon was the integrating element in her life, the delicate but powerful mainspring of her being, is clear from the crushing effect his death had upon her. Consciously and unconsciously he had been the central fact and governing force in her universe. With his passing, something broke within her soul and spirit that no human science or art could restore. Morale collapsed, the wellsprings of interest dried up. Life lost purpose, meaning, value; nothing

remained to render its continuance tolerable or rewarding; henceforth it could only be a quiet, unresisting awaiting of her own passage into the unknown. Dissolution might—would, if the doctrines of her spiritual advisers were true—unite her with Napoleon, but, whether this were certain or only a possibility, she was ready to welcome the end.

During the winter of 1821, the Princess resumed for a time her accustomed evening receptions in Rome, but as she now made no effort to combat the maladies from which she had so long suffered, her strength failed rapidly and general society saw her no more. For the greater part of two years she alternated between her bed and the cushions of a reclining chair. After a severe attack of what was probably pneumonia, the doctors pronounced the air of Rome too harsh for her and urged a permanent change to a milder climate. A reconciliation was effected with Prince Borghese and she was removed to the Villa Strozzi in Florence. Whether, as some say, this reunion was due to the Princess's own initiative, or whether, as others intimate, Pope Leo XII brought it about, is immaterial. Prince Borghese received his wife with kindness, surrounded her with comfort, gave her the care she required, and so displayed the spark of greatness in his soul.

Little by little, Pauline's glorious beauty faded, falling away like petals from flowers in autumn. Only her eyes retained their soft refulgence. As Napoleon had been forced to abdicate the throne of power won by

his genius, so his sister now surrendered the throne of beauty she had so long held as undisputed queen. At rare intervals there was a transitory return of her supreme possession. It came when, stirred by a flash of her old-time incandescent spirit, she would demand to be dressed in one of her loveliest gowns, wear again the firmament of her lambent jewels, and receive a few guests with all her former charm and amiability. Then, the pallor of illness vanished; with her beauty's palingenesis she looked like a vision from another world.

The last important act of Pauline's life was the dictating of her will, an amazing but characteristic document, comparable only to Napoleon's in length, particularity, and infallible remembrance of the humblest persons, the most trifling objects connected with her. It is full of revealing glimpses of her personality and the peculiar workings of her mind. Ninety-one paragraphs describe specific legacies to more than that number of individuals and institutions. Relatives by blood and marriage, old friends and recent, attendants and servants of high and low degree, bankers, cardinals, physicians, tradesmen, churches, the poor of Ajaccio, Rome, and Viareggio—it seemed that no one living who had touched her life at any point was forgotten. The failure of her English friends to save Napoleon did not leave the Princess unappreciative or ungrateful. To the Duke of Hamilton (Marquis of Douglas) she left her silver-gilt dressing-case "as a mark of my friendship for him"; to his Duchess two Sèvres porcelain vases, and to their

daughter a ring set with opals. The Duke of Devonshire received a little wrought iron *medaillon* bequeathed to Pauline by Napoleon in his will. To Lord Holland she gave the books in her library at Rome, and to Lord Gower a Sèvres tea service adorned with portraits of famous women. Even the son of Jérôme by his marriage with Miss Paterson of Baltimore, Maryland, was not forgotten; to this boy whom she had never seen Pauline bequeathed 20,000 francs. The paragraph mentioning Borghese has, naturally, a special interest. Of money and works of art he had more than a sufficiency, and assuredly he needed no keepsake "for remembrance." To him she presented her furnished villa at Lucca "as a slight testimony of my appreciation of the sincere and faithful attention he has shown me during my long illness"; but possibly the most generous legacy in the entire testament lay in the words she appended: "And I gratefully acknowledge, that although circumstances and events have from time to time caused disunion between us, Prince Borghese has ever manifested the greatest attachment and loyalty to my brother, the Emperor." That was extremely handsome of Napoleon's sister in view of the Prince's pusillanimous running to cover after Fontainebleau and his more than thrice denial of the General under whose flag he had once eagerly sought to fight. But Pauline was dying, as a following clause in her will said, "without hatred or rancor toward any person whatsoever, in the faith and doctrine of the Church Catho-

lic, Apostolic, and Roman," and with a heart in which only feelings of devout resignation and forgiveness prevailed. The will contains no mention of or allusion to the men whom Pauline had loved. Fréron and De Canouville of course were dead; but M. de Forbin had accepted office under the Bourbon Government, and Colonel Duchand had married a wealthy Englishwoman. In the last clauses, the Princess strictly enjoined that no autopsy be performed upon her, and that she should not be exposed to view after death. She desired that her body be embalmed (by the process then followed that rendered its being cut open unnecessary), and placed in the Borghese Chapel in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome.

"Madame the testatrix," concluded the document, "pronounced in a clear and audible voice, before me, the notary, and five witnesses, the names of the beneficiaries, the legacies, and other dispositions contained in this testament, which I have written down verbatim with my own hand, in the presence of Her Highness, the testatrix, and the five witnesses. In their presence, also, I have read it through, and of all that I have written they have shown a full and clear understanding."

Prince Borghese and Cardinal Augustin Rivarola were named executors, and the Princess Pauline Borghese signed her name for the last time.

On June 9, 1825, when the Princess knew that death was only a few hours away, she ordered her attendants to dress her in a resplendent court gown. Her hair

was arranged as for an Imperial ball at the Tuileries; powder and rouge were applied to the drawn face now so sadly in need of these artificial substitutes for nature's healthier tints; her diamonds and pearls were placed on the shrunken arms, neck, and breast. Was this a final votive offering to her long worshipped body? Or, did another thought cross her capricious mind? Did she recall the thousand personifications she had seen, in art and letters, of Death envisaged as a Man? Then she would confront him as all her life she had confronted men—with the conquering weapon of Beauty. She asked for a mirror and looked at herself for the last time. When Death came, the glass was still held tightly gripped in the fingers of Pauline Bonaparte.

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Bibliographical Note

SO FAR as I am aware, no separate biography of the Princess Pauline Borghese exists in English. In France at least three writers have devoted special volumes to her, but, in my opinion, all three present a distorted portrait of the Princess and their pages are filled with errors of fact and long disproved assertions regarding her. Turquan, in *Les Sœurs de Napoléon* (1896), d'Alméras in his *Une Amoureuse* (1906), and Hector Fleischmann in *Pauline Bonaparte et ses Amants* (1910), all in varying degree portray her as an incorrigible libertine. The work of d'Alméras is filled with matter irrelevant to its main theme, Fleischmann neglects or treats in only the sketchiest manner significant events and important periods in her life, while Turquan's chronology is wildly erratic. All three have a predilection for including the more gamy portions of the mass of filthy accusation circulated about Pauline by the enemies of Napoleon, not excepting the charge that brother and sister were guilty of incest. Disinterested historical research has proved conclusively that most of "cet ordure," as Masson justly calls it, was the

deliberate invention, for political purposes, of the Royalists and their hireling journalists and pamphleteers, of Bourbon spies, and venal members of the secret police seeking the favorable notice of their double-dealing chief, Fouché.

The sources from which a biographical sketch of Pauline may be drawn, although widely scattered, are fairly abundant and not difficult of access. The present work could easily have been extended to two volumes had I chosen to include *all* the materials, true, false, doubtful, or unproved, relating to the Princess that are accessible to anyone desiring to use them. I have omitted much, not because it did not suit my purposes or accord with my point of view, but chiefly because of its triviality, repetitiousness, or unreliability.

The *Mémoires* of Pauline's contemporaries have been drawn on for many facts and anecdotes about her, but due caution has been observed in the use made of these entertaining but not always accurate writings. Most of them were written many years after the events they describe; their authors' memories were often faulty in the matter of dates, or the place and sequence in which certain episodes occurred; and they are also necessarily colored by the later views of the writers or considerations of political and social expediency. I have especially refrained from citing two well-known *Mémoires* that make frequent mention of the Princess, viz., those of Barras and of Fouché. Neither was written by the man

under whose name it passes; both are maliciously prejudiced and notoriously inaccurate.

While making a first-hand exploration and use of all the French and other European authorities within reach, my greatest debt is to that encyclopedic digest of Napoleana, the thirteen volumes of Frédéric Masson's monumental *Napoléon et sa Famille*. During forty years of incessant labor Masson saw, read, and analyzed more printed and manuscript material relating to Napoleon than any other man who has ever lived, and no other synthesis of this vast literature is comparable to his in scope or systematic presentation. Every student of the period leans heavily upon Masson but not all acknowledge their debt to him. I am well aware of the hostility of professional historians toward him because of his refusal to reveal the sources of some of the most important statements and conclusions in his text. Although he repeatedly gave what appear to me reasonable explanations for his policy in this matter, and offered to open his portfolios for private inspection by any qualified person, his professorial critics have persistently and none too courteously disparaged his work.

As the present book is intended for general reading, footnotes, and volume and page references to the authorities used have been deliberately excluded. Apparatus of this sort, while proper to works written by scholars for other scholars, distracts the attention of general readers and constantly interrupts the flow of such interest as the narrative may arouse. The following

list gives the titles of the books I have made most use of, whose statements have been checked and confirmed so far as it was possible to do so, or whose viewpoints have been adopted after due reflection and weighing of evidence.

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¶Pauline, *Favorite Sister of Napoleon*, is set in Linotype Caslon Old Face, one of the finest modern cuttings of the original type designed by William Caslon. Format by A. W. Rushmore. Manufactured by the Haddon Craftsmen for the publishers, Harper & Brothers, New York and London, Mdccccxxx.

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Carlton, William N.C.
Pauline, favorite sister of Napoleon.